

# Local Government SERVICE

**PUBLIC  
RELATIONS  
ADVANCING**

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OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICERS

No. 1. Vol. XXIV

JANUARY, 1946

207.2 THREEPENCE

## A HAPPY—AND PROSPEROUS—NEW YEAR?

WE had hoped that this month's LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE would have been a really joyful New Year number, announcing the birth of that National Charter of salaries and service conditions which the National Whitley Council has been gestating, and members have been impatiently awaiting, for so many months. The happy event was expected on November 30, when the council last met, but, as happens sometimes with human births, the infant delayed its arrival. It is an uncommon infant, with not one but a multitude of parents, and some of these, the employers' representatives on the provincial councils, called for more time to consider the shape of their progeny. This request the council as a whole accepted, while at the same time giving an assurance that the delay in delivery would make no difference to the date upon which the birth will be formally registered. Whenever agreed, therefore, the Charter and scales will take effect on April 1.

The National Council is next to meet on Wednesday, January 30, and it is confidently expected that on that day the proud parents will deliver their offspring to an expectant service. So that the glad tidings may be announced as soon as possible, it is probable that publication of the February number of LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE will be delayed to contain them. If this course is approved by the National Executive Council, the journal should reach members by about February 14.

### Salary Levels Too Low

It is to be hoped that the babe will satisfy their expectations for, as the old rhyme tells us, "Wednesday's child has far to go," and there is much to be done before salaries and conditions in the local government service can be regarded as satisfactory. Even before the war, salaries in particular, in many sections of the service, lagged far behind those paid for work of comparable quality and importance in commerce, industry, and the professions. The war, which has increased incomes for the majority of workers well beyond the modest level of the local government bonus, has accentuated the disparity while at the same time destroying such small case as there might once have been to justify it.

In the past, the payment of generally low salaries to local government officers was defended on the ground that those who received them enjoyed the additional advantages, not available to most other employees, of security of tenure, the prospect of a pension, and a relatively easy job. Of these advantages, the value of the first two is likely—as a correspondent points out in this month's "Readers' Forum"—soon to be diminished by the introduction of social security for all, while the third, for most officers, has long been a mockery. That "soft job at the Town Hall" which, in former days, almost rivalled Wigan and mothers-in-law as the comedian's stand-by, has now become a despairing struggle both to

keep afloat on the flood of circulars, orders, resolutions, inquiries, and demands which daily pours in from Whitehall, council chamber, and public, and to swim ahead of ever more exacting technical requirements. The dry-as-dust clerk plodding through letters and ledgers,

year is today getting around £450. But it is still an untidy patchwork, with many black areas, and, on the whole, it is fair to say that the average local government officer fares ill, both directly by comparison with those doing work of similar responsibility outside the service, and indirectly by comparison with the general body of wage earners. So great has the disparity become in some branches of the service, indeed, that it is not uncommon to find technical and administrative officers drawing less pay than the manual workers they are appointed to direct and supervise. Where is here the reward for training, for skill, and for additional responsibility, which our wage structure is designed to ensure?

The need for radical improvement is urgent. During the past six years, the relative smallness of salaries in local government has been in part offset and disguised by war conditions. In a period when normal purchases and recreations have been impossible, most officers have been able to "rub along" on their pre-war salaries, plus the bonus. But how will those salaries look when the time comes, as it soon must, to replace—at post-war prices—six or seven years of arrears of clothing, furniture, and household equipment, and to enjoy once again "normal" holidays and other relaxations?

### Future of Service at Stake

There is, of course, much more in this than the personal angle, important as that is. The representatives of the local authorities have joined with the government and with NALGO in demanding a local government service that will be fully capable, in training and in efficiency, of tackling the heavy responsibilities now being put upon it, and likely to be greatly increased during the coming decade. It is a truism that, in the years ahead, local government will need the most able technicians, administrators, and rank-and-file officers that can be found. But it will get them only if it is prepared to pay for them.

The new salary scales promise a satisfactory basis—but only if local authorities apply them in the right spirit. A scale, however impressive, is useless by itself: what is important is the position to which the individual is allocated on it; in other words, the detailed application of the grading scheme. Whether this is good or bad will depend more on the individual local authority than on the national and provincial Whitley Councils. NALGO's task, therefore, will not end with the promulgation of the new scales: rather, will it begin then.

But, first, we must get the scale, and for that we look to the meeting of the National Council at the end of this month, and to the meeting of provincial council representatives which will precede it. The local government service has followed the protracted negotiations leading up to these meetings with exemplary patience—a patience so exemplary, indeed, that some employers may have come to imagine that it is inexhaustible. But recent correspondence in

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if he ever existed, has gone for good. His successor today must be an Admirable Crichton of public service, skilled in administration, up-to-date in technical knowledge, and swift and sure in executive decision. To cite one example only, there are today more than seventy separate examinations listed as appropriate for the local government service, and it is doubtful whether any section of the community, outside the specialist fields of medicine, science, and the law, contains so high a proportion of professionally trained and qualified men and women.

### Many Black Areas

But, while the demands of the service, in qualification, in ability, and in volume of work, have expanded beyond recognition, the monetary rewards it offers have lagged behind. True, the position is not nearly so black as some recent correspondents have painted it. Thanks largely to NALGO's efforts, salaries have advanced appreciably in the past quarter-century, and many a man who, in 1914, would have been compelled to exist on, say, £120 a



these columns, and other indications, provide clear evidence that it is wearing thin, and we would close this comment with a word of warning. The local government service is long-suffering. It is unaggressive and prefers to obtain satisfaction for its claims through the friendly method of negotiation. But it has waited long enough, and any failure now is likely to provoke a crisis grave alike for NALGO and for local government.

### The "Staff College"

THE lukewarm reception given to the proposed administrative staff college, both by the civil service and by local government officers, has not discouraged its sponsors, who now announce that Lord Hambleden has loaned them his riverside mansion at Henley-on-Thames for its habitation, that the Nuffield Foundation has offered £10,000 to start a scholarship fund, and that the college has been incorporated as a company with a court of governors.

While few will question the basic idea behind the college—namely, in the words of Lord Latham, one of the governors: "to give young administrators an opportunity of standing back from their jobs for three months, and of acquiring fresh experience, a wider outlook, and a grasp of the basic principles of administration and organisation"—many experienced officers doubt whether this can be achieved in a residential establishment. If it can, well and good—for none will deny the need in the ever-widening field of public enterprise for administrators to acquire, in addition to specialist qualifications, a full appreciation of the principles of administration which are common both to the public service and to large-scale private enterprise. In public concerns, the test of profit—even where it is a valid test—is difficult to apply; efficiency must be sought and measured by other means and not least by ensuring that the staff are trained for their tasks, that their professional zeal is not allowed to wane, and that they are kept continuously in touch with ideas and practices current outside their own immediate field of work.

### The Ability is There—

DISCUSSING the forms of management proper for enterprises taken over by the state, a writer in "The Times" recently described as "clearly the right decision" a ministerial promise that the Bank of England staff would remain outside the framework of the civil service. That is an implied criticism of civil servants which presumably goes equally for local government officers. Would the writer say that their qualifications and methods were unsuited, for instance, to the conduct of a nationalised gas industry—though many of them have many years of experience in this and similar fields?

We believe that this view of public officials is mistaken; that they are able and ready to assume responsibility for undertakings which need quick decisions and a sort of administrative absolutism. That many have to adopt more deliberate methods is due to the nature of their present duties as the executive agents of a policy prescribed, often in great detail, by elected representatives. Were a wider freedom to be conceded to them, were they to be charged with responsibilities for management and given undivided control to make or mar the job entrusted to them, there is no reason why they should not succeed—as so many have brilliantly demonstrated when given just those opportunities during the war. The record on another page this month of three NALGO members who have risen from the ranks to become lieutenant-colonels tells its own story.

In such a new orientation, some of the fundamental ideas of the founders of the staff college would have added cogency. They

urge the need for enabling their students, not to become personnel managers, or statisticians, or public relations officers themselves, but to understand what these various specialists can do and to co-ordinate their efforts. They urge that departmental chiefs should devote more attention to selecting their assistants and less to doing their work for them; that they should give at least as much care to the organisation and morale of their departments as to wise decisions on issues of policy. Many of these wise words apply to conditions to-day; they will apply with even greater force as the scope of communal economic life widens.

### The Price of Planning

TO the familiar question "What is all this planning going to cost?" there is the equally familiar answer, "no more than rebuilding our damaged cities and providing new houses without a plan." An elaboration of this theme is provided by F. J. OSBORN, of the Town and Country Planning Association, in *The New Planning* (Faber and Faber, 8s. 6d.). Redevelopment is certainly going to cost money, but this is inevitable expenditure: the question is, how can we ensure that it is wise expenditure? We are faced with three possible redevelopment policies: (1) to keep our towns as densely populated as they are; (2) to expand outwards in dormitory suburbs; or (3) to rehouse the "overspill" in detached communities. Mr. Osborn examines the effect of each on local government finance.

Under the first policy, rateable values would not fall, they might be increased, but municipal expenditure would rise and so probably would rate-poundages. The crowded urban development would be expensive and ratepayers and taxpayers would get least value for what they paid. The second policy, which was that of the inter-war years, would reduce rateable value in central areas, but against this there would be some fall in the capital cost of services in those areas. Rateable value of business premises might not be affected, at any rate until the firms also migrated to the suburbs. In the suburbs, rate-income would rise, but so would expenditure and there could be no question of compensating for losses in the centre by profits in the outer areas.

The effect of the third policy of satellite development, so far as central areas are concerned, would be the same as that of policy No. 2. Rates in those areas would rise, but not necessarily more than they would under either of the other policies, neither of which would provide satisfactory urban living conditions. In the new areas to be developed, capital expenditure would, of course, be necessary to provide schools and other communal services. But their cost would be less than in an urban area; the development of the "overspill" area would raise rateable values, which would help to meet the cost; and, as a later measure, the decongestion policy could be financed by the collection of betterment charges. Mr. Osborn has provided useful support for the thesis that "Planning Pays."

### Ending the Medical Test

THE suggestion made in these columns in October that the time had come to abandon the medical test for admission to a local authority superannuation fund has met with a speedy and sympathetic response from the National Whitley Council. At its meeting on November 30, the council adopted, on the suggestion of the staff side, a resolution recommending local authorities, when making new appointments "to give sympathetic consideration to applications from ex-service men who are found to be not up to the normal health standards for superannuation purposes, where such unfitness is solely due to war service."

This does not, of course, go so far as we suggested, nor will it help the correspondent who, in this month's "Readers' Forum" tells how his own prospects of getting a better job with another authority have been wrecked,

notwithstanding the fact that he was perfectly fit when he entered the service. But it will—if local authorities apply it as they should—remove the existing barriers to mobility and promotion of disabled ex-service men, and thus free them from an added and totally unnecessary handicap. Moreover, by breaking the rigidity of the existing rule, it may encourage local authorities to examine the whole question afresh and to recognise how little justified is the view that a medical test does in fact protect the solvency of the superannuation fund.

### Publicity for Cremation

WHY not municipal publicity to popularise cremation? asked P. H. JONES in an address to the National Association of Cemetery and Crematorium Superintendents; it would be, he argued, as legitimate a form of propaganda as that for the use of V.D. clinics or the diphtheria immunisation service. But for the war, the increase in the number of crematoria would by 1944 have provided for 75,000 cremations a year, against the actual figure of 40,000. Mr. Jones claimed that 200 more local authorities were now contemplating the provision of crematoria, and argued that the present was a specially auspicious time for an advance, since both the siting and the design of crematoria can be blended into the plans for new or reconstructed towns.

The replacement of burial by cremation, too, would economise land and help the local authorities in their difficult task of finding sites for the many purposes for which land is wanted. And, with the co-operation of architects and landscape designers, the crematoria of the future might become additions to the amenities of our towns.

The time has passed when the advocates of cremation were looked upon as eccentrics or worse; but the restrictive legislation of those days has not gone. Local authorities could do much towards securing the necessary amendments to existing statutes to render cremation as simple as other means of disposal.

### A Hospitals Exhibition

THE exhibition of London County Council hospitals to be held at County Hall from January 21 to 26 should attract a large attendance. It is of interest to NALGO members for three reasons: first, as an example of public relations policy on the grand scale; second, as a counterblast to those over-ardent supporters of the voluntary hospitals who seek to buttress their case by out-of-date libels on the municipal hospital; and third, as a means of overcoming the shortage of nurses and domestics. The London County Council claims that substantially all the conditions laid down in the government code are already common form in its hospitals. National scales of salary and conditions of employment, freedom from irksome personal restrictions, comfortable living quarters, staff representative machinery—all these are in being, and a service of 87 hospitals staffed by 17,000 nurses and 10,000 domestics naturally offers exceptional scope for promotion. All this may be true enough and Londoners would be wise to flock in their thousands to see what goes on in their own hospitals. Most of the government-recommended improvements in conditions for hospital workers to which we referred last month may be realised in the L.C.C. hospitals, but the long hours, the "gap" between school leaving and entry into hospital service, and the special industrial risks common to all hospital workers, still call for reform.

It is the aim of "Local Government Service" to encourage the fullest freedom of opinion and expression within the Association. Unless the fact is expressly stated, therefore, views put forward in the journal—whether in the editorial columns or in signed articles—should not necessarily be regarded as expressing the considered policy of the Association.



# Public Relations Advancing on Four Fronts <sup>3</sup>

## A National Committee Established

## Urmston's Lead to Local Authorities

## Press Ready To Take a Fuller Part

## Information Service for Every Town

NALGO will warmly echo the advice which HERBERT MORRISON, Lord President of the Council, gave to the conference of Labour borough councillors at Nottingham last month.

Urging them eschew secrecy and to keep in touch with the citizens, for whom they are working, he said:

"Dim and pompous mystery is all right for those who want to hide what they are doing—or not doing. The town halls belong to the people, and the people have a right to know what their councils are about.

"Get people interested in what you are doing. Make sure that they understand why, and how. You will find that your work will run smoother and your successes will be strengthened by the co-operation of individual citizens and will come twice as fast."

That is exactly the view which this Association has been advocating in its public relations policy for the past five years. Thanks in part, no doubt, to the skilful advocacy for it in the NALGO Reconstruction Committee's Report on Relations Between Local Government and the Community—of which close on 20,000 copies have been supplied to councillors, members of Parliament, and others in the past six months—it is a view that is winning increasing acceptance among those who direct local government policy.

That report, it will be remembered, called for a comprehensive policy of public relations for local government on two levels, national and local. Nationally, it suggested the formation of a central local government Public Relations Council, empowered both to co-ordinate local activities and to engage in national activities, such as the production of books, films, exhibitions, and broadcasts, on its own account. Locally, it recommended the appointment by every local authority of a public relations committee and a public relations officer (full-time or part-time) charged with improving the relations and the understanding between the authority and the citizens.

### National—and Local—Action

Although it is barely six months since the report was published, substantial progress has already been made towards the attainment of these objectives.

Nationally, as a result of the initiative of the late Minister of Health, Mr. WILLINK—who showed his own keen interest in his speech calling for "more limelight on local government" when he launched the NALGO exhibition in London—there has been set up, by the Ministry and the five local authority associations, a consultative committee on local government publicity. This committee, whose chairman is Ald. CHARLES KEY, M.P., Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry, is charged with "assisting and co-ordinating the development of local government publicity on both a general and a local basis." Since the committee has just been formed, it is early to predict what it will do; but it does at least provide the basis on which might be built the Public Relations Council envisaged by the Reconstruction Committee.

In the local field, too, there are encouraging signs. More than 300 local authorities have supplied copies of the report to their members, and many have directed committees to consider and report upon it. Several have already decided to adopt some of its recommendations.

One of the most interesting schemes prepared is that of Urmston Urban District Council, which has provisionally adopted proposals submitted by its clerk, L. WATKINS, after

consideration of the Reconstruction Committee's report. These include:

**Public Relations Committee**—To be appointed with the precise terms of reference recommended by the Reconstruction Committee, namely:

(i) to co-ordinate the public relations interests and activities of the various departments of the local authority;

(ii) to maintain a continuous survey over all contacts between the local authority and the community it serves;

(iii) to direct the use of all available media to inform and interest the citizens in the work of the authority; and conversely

(iv) to investigate public responses, complaints, and needs, and, where necessary, to report them to the authority.

This committee will consist of the chairmen of all the major committees, representatives of selected local organisations and of each of the local newspapers, and a limited number of citizens specially interested in public work. It will meet monthly, on the day following the council meeting, so that it can give prompt dissemination to, or elucidation of, any matter considered by the council and calling for such special treatment.

Mr. Watkins added two further admirable suggestions—that, after preliminary discussion in private, the meeting should be opened to the public, who should be invited to ask questions; and that its members should follow the example of the Urmston branch public relations committee by making a particular individual responsible for a particular section of its work.

**Public Relations Officer**—While favouring the principle of having a full-time public relations officer, Mr. Watkins feels that the cost of such an appointment would be more than the Urmston ratepayers will yet be ready to pay. Such an appointment would be better postponed and, as an interim expedient, he suggests the appointment of a part-time secretary to the public relations committee (who might be either a member of the present staff or a citizen already engaged in voluntary public work). In addition to performing the normal secretarial work of the committee, the secretary would be at liberty to attend all meetings of council committees, to gain "inside" knowledge and thus be in a position to correct unfounded or inaccurate reports.

**Press Conferences**—These are to be held at regular intervals, probably fortnightly. They will be attended by the clerk and other chief officers and by the chairman and secretary of the public relations committee, together with the chairmen of any other council committees who have information to give. All local newspapers will be invited to send representatives. At the conference, news will be released both of recommendations of public interest to come before the next meeting of the council, and of the progress of schemes already approved—housing, highways, parks, and so on—and questions will be answered.

**Committee System**—Here, Mr. Watkins makes a proposal of great interest. "An organised opposition," he points out, "is recognised to be a potent factor in democratic government," and he goes on to suggest a method by which that principle might be made as effective in local government as it is in Parliament—but without "party politics." The plan is that, in future, membership of each committee should be limited to not more than ten members (the full council has 18 members). This arrangement, it is felt, will promote healthy competition among councillors for seats on the committees; will ensure that those who gain seats take a greater pride and interest in their committee's work, and obtain specialist knowledge of it; and will provide, from among the eight or more members not on a particular committee, a potential "opposition" likely to question the committee's work in the full council. Thus, every major recommendation would be subjected to the test of debate in full council—to the benefit alike of the committees themselves and of the public, who would get, not mere reports of rubber-stamped decisions, but reasoned debates stating the arguments for and against each proposal.

In the past, the clerk has been authorised to censor committee minutes before they were

supplied to the Press. In future, for an experimental period, they are to go to the Press uncensored, newspapers being relied upon themselves to "blue-pencil" items the reporting of which would be contrary to the public interest.

As a first step in giving effect to this public relations policy, the special committee of the council which has been considering the plan called last month a conference with representatives of the local and Manchester Press. The conference approved the scheme, agreed to the appointment of the public relations committee, and, in response to representations from the Press, decided to recommend the council to suspend a standing order debarring councillors from discussing committee matters with reporters pending their ratification by the council.

This conference is to be followed, in the near future, by another to which will be invited representatives of all appropriate local organisations (including the NALGO branch public relations committee) and a number of individual citizens known to be interested.

### Journalists' Support

That newspapers fully share the Reconstruction Committee's desire for closer relations between them and local government has already been demonstrated by the way in which the Newspaper Society, the Institute of Journalists, and the National Union of Journalists collaborated with the committee in preparing its report. One of these bodies, the Institute of Journalists, recently followed the point up in a memorandum which it sent to the Minister of Health and the associations of local authorities.

This memorandum complained that many local authorities were disregarding both the letter and the spirit of the Admission of the Press to Meetings Act, 1908, which provides for public reporting of local authority meetings. Although, as a result of the Institute's efforts, meetings of local information and food control committees were opened to the Press, there was still a great diversity of practice among local authorities. Some admitted the Press to meetings of committees; others refused to do that and, by confining all debates to meetings of the council in committee, restricted their open meetings to formal approval of minutes from which it was impossible for the Press or the public to obtain adequate knowledge of the council's activities. Similarly, while some authorities supplied to the Press copies of committee minutes and reports in advance of the council meeting, with freedom to report and comment on them, others imposed hampering restrictions.

"Our hope," the memorandum declares, "is that in any new legislation provisions will be made to remove the hindrances to the fullest publicity that now exist. We hope that the associations of local authorities will support representations to this effect and realise that a better partnership between them and the Press can be of the greatest value in meeting the responsibilities of the immediate future.

"The demand for their local paper by men and women serving abroad with the Forces is due to a real interest in what is happening in their own home towns, particularly in regard to administration and post-war planning. This attitude to and interest in local affairs should be fostered by adequate Press publicity.

"There should be an end to the tendency to restrict open discussion of public affairs. We feel that an undertaking to observe the operative legislation with regard to admission of the Press should be included in the declaration now made by a councillor when taking office."

That newspapers generally, notwithstanding the acute shortage of space, are eager to



# We Have Blazed The Trail—Now Let Local Authorities Follow!

By A. J. MORTIMER, Public Relations Officer, Brighton Branch.

publish more information about local government, is shown by the experience both of NALGO Headquarters and branches.

Last summer, Headquarters sent a circular to all newspapers, pointing out that, when municipal elections were resumed in November and this Spring, the registers would include some ten million electors who had never voted in a municipal election before, and suggesting that the newspapers should seek to educate them in their civic responsibilities. To assist in this work, two series of articles were offered—one, on local government generally, to be supplied from Headquarters, and the other, on the work of particular local authorities, to be supplied by branches.

More than a hundred newspapers replied warmly welcoming the scheme. Headquarters sent them a series of twelve articles under such titles as "Why Vote?" "A New Voter's Quiz," "From Layette to Lay-out—What a County Borough Council Does," and "Civilisation for Sixpence a Day." Where local articles were asked for, the request was passed on to the appropriate branch.

These articles were all widely published during the weeks before the elections. Particularly effective was the work done by some branches. Bedford Borough branch, for example, arranged, with the full support of the local authority, for a reporter from the "Bedford Times" to interview each of the chief officers and write articles on the work of their departments. These articles—ten in all—were published by the "Bedford Times" under the heading "Minding Your Own Business," and have since been reprinted as a pamphlet. In addition, the council, on the suggestion of the branch, arranged four public meetings, in October, under the chairmanship of the mayor, at which the chief officers dealt with the work of their different departments, and answered many questions. So successful was the scheme that the council, now fully converted to public relations, has appointed a sub-committee to handle it and to develop further activities.

Similarly, Cheltenham and several other branches arranged for the publication of series of articles in local newspapers, whose editors all collaborated readily.

## Local Information Service

Yet another opportunity for public relations, in a different field, is provided by a circular (197/45) sent by the Ministry of Health to local authorities in November.

This circular urges all local authorities to set up, as a permanent peacetime activity, an adequate local information service, on the lines of the wartime information centres which proved so valuable after air raids.

"The Minister feels," the circular states, "that it would be a misfortune if the valuable experience gained were now to be lost, and he considers that an adequate information service should be built up and maintained by local authorities and should take the form of the provision in every area of an information centre to which inquirers seeking information on all questions relating to local government services could apply, and from which inquirers could, when necessary, be directed to offices at which information about other services can be obtained."

It is suggested that information centres should be provided by county borough and district councils, either directly, or by using the services of the voluntary organisation, such as an existing Citizens' Advice Bureau. County councils, while not themselves providing an information centre, would provide the district centres with material to enable them to give information about county services, and would arrange a regular channel of communication for the purpose. In London, both the Metropolitan borough councils and the L.C.C. should have their own information centres.

Hitherto, the cost of wartime information

(Continued at foot of next column)

BRITAIN'S first municipal elections for six years have revealed many changes in the opinions of the electorate. But one thing, regrettably, was little changed—the very low percentage voting. Until the majority of people exercise their right to vote, we have much to do to bridge the gap between the local authority and the citizen.

For more than ten years now, NALGO has pursued a public relations policy which reached the culmination of one stage in the recent Report on the Relations between Local Government and the Community. All over the country, branch public relations officers have laboured to give effect to that policy and their direction from Headquarters has been of the best. Their unofficial efforts have met varying degrees of success. In some places NALGO has secured the full co-operation of the council; but in others, the reverse has been the case. In short, as one speaker at the Blackpool meeting of public relations officers put it, we have been trying to slay the Giant Apathy with a three-halfpenny dart. Nevertheless, if we have only pointed the way, it has been well worth while. In fact, however, we have done far more than that.

In Brighton, for example, we started with what might be termed *negative* public relations—the answering of unjust attacks in the Press and elsewhere. Such attacks greatly diminished and, hoping that our campaign was partly responsible, we went on to a *positive* policy, which involved giving talks on local government, lecturing to students, and arranging visits to corporation undertakings. In addition a "live" branch magazine has appeared monthly, one of its main jobs being to maintain the interest of the local government officer away in the Forces and industry.

This year has seen great strides in the work, largely due to the NALGO local govern-

(Continued from preceding column)

services, whether through local authorities or voluntary Citizens' Advice Bureaux, has been borne by central funds, through an Exchequer grant. In future, it is to be a local responsibility, the cost of which should be borne locally, and the Minister is prepared to sanction reasonable expenditure by a local authority to enable it to set up an information centre of its own, or to make a contribution to a Citizens' Advice Bureau or other voluntary organisation.

While it is yet early to judge how individual local authorities will give effect to this circular, it seems probable that, where there is already an efficient Citizens' Advice Bureau, the local authority will make use of that. In other areas the local authority will set up its own information service and, provided the officers selected for this are well chosen and allowed a wide discretion, there is no reason why it should not be equally successful.

Whatever system is adopted, NALGO branches ought to collaborate with the information service as fully as they can. It offers the ideal medium for public relations work, and might well be developed on the lines the Association has already laid down as desirable, adding to its purely advisory service the more positive one of taking information to the citizen, through lectures, brains trusts, films, exhibitions, newspaper articles, and the like. The information centre would naturally come under the control of the local authority public relations committee, and its director might well be the public relations officer; were the public relations committee to be a joint one of councillors and officers, as is already the case in some areas, co-ordination would be complete.

ment exhibition. It brought to light an interest in public relations and a fund of goodwill which surprised even me—a perennial optimist. Moreover, it was followed by many requests for talks and lectures, all of which have been followed up. The work involved is carried out voluntarily, largely in spare-time, and has a tendency, as many branch P.R.O.s will doubt have discovered, to grow like a snowball. More and more one realises the tremendous demand there is for information and opportunities for discussion to replace disbanded wartime groups. So long as the work is unofficial, however, there will always be difficulties, particularly in arranging the "open discussion" type of meeting. A judicious mixture of council members and officials is required, which implies that the meeting shall be sponsored by the council. Undoubtedly, too, many aspects of public relations are neglected because branches cannot afford them.

The Reconstruction Committee's report, and the experience of every branch P.R.O., indicate the need for an official public relations policy.

As to the form that official policy should take, there are so many possibilities that it is difficult to list them. Briefly, the aim is to make every local government officer public-relations-minded, every citizen local government conscious, and to obliterate apathy. A good start would be made by including the study of civics in the curriculum of all senior schools. In Brighton, this is done in the senior section of one school and has proved most successful. The students run the class as a committee, the master being present only to offer advice if asked. There are visiting speakers drawn from the various departments of the local authority, local newspapers, large undertakings, and so on. The class has been running for a year, and I found its members efficient, businesslike, and ready and able to express their views far more lucidly than the average school child. Youth organisations and clubs enable public relations work to be done among adolescents, and the adult can be reached through Rotary clubs, women's guilds, and similar organisations.

Such clubs and guilds, however, do not cover the ordinary working man or office worker with few outside interests. There remain the press, radio, and the cinema. The two last are, broadly speaking, instruments of national policy, but the first is a valuable local instrument. The ability to write lively and interesting prose is an invaluable aid to the P.R.O. in dealing with local newspapers, and a great deal can be learnt through studying styles of writing and treatment in British and American papers. Recently, in a copy of "Life", there appeared an article on the work of the meteorological observer, which was fresh, interesting, and live in style, and illustrated with splendid photographs. Many apparently drab local government subjects could be put over with equal vigour, let alone those far from dull which simply cry out for presentation to the newspaper and magazine reader.

While I have not referred here to internal public relations, I hope that they will not be neglected in refresher courses. During the war, members of the various departments intermingled in a way never seen before in local government. Must we slip back and become narrow and departmentalised again? The P.R.O. should try to see that we do not.

Here is a final suggestion which would, however, require legislation. Make polling day a public holiday! This would draw greater attention to the day, bring home the importance of local government to the citizen, and remove the last excuse for failure to vote—"no time."



# Scrap the District Committee—Have County Committees Instead! <sup>5</sup>

By "DON"

"IN future," says the November journal in its report of the October meeting of the National Executive Council, "every branch which comes within the area of a Provincial Whitley Council must be a member of the district committee for that area."

It is good that the N.E.C. has given some thought to this problem, but it seems to me that, while it has tied up its neat-looking parcel prettily with red-tape, it has not paid sufficient attention to the contents of the parcel. This decision, in fact, provides no solution to the increasing problems with which we in NALGO are faced.

It is important, of course, that there should be a strong link between NALGO members on a Provincial Council and all the other NALGO members of that area, and it is an obvious solution to stipulate (a) that the district committee and provincial council areas should coincide, and (b) that the district committee should be responsible for selecting the members to serve on the staffs' side of the provincial council. Such a solution is neat and tidy; but it does not overcome the weaknesses inherent in the scheme, nor does it satisfy the present or future needs of NALGO organisation.

Why should the district committee follow the lead of the provincial council on areas? What is good for the provincial council is not necessarily good for NALGO's own organisation.

## "Unwieldy and Ineffective"

And what of the district committee itself? Must we maintain this extensive, unwieldy, and ineffective link between the branches and the N.E.C. merely because it is time-honoured? Twenty years ago, the district committee may have served a more useful purpose than it does to-day. Its very title, "committee," is a relic of long-forgotten days. Certainly it is not a committee now, as any who have attended one will know.

Examination of present district committee areas shows considerable variations in size, character, and membership. Take a few examples.

**Metropolitan**—25,000 members and 109 branches in an area of 700 square miles;

**Scottish**—10,000 members and 41 branches in the whole of Scotland, an area of 30,000 square miles;

**North Western and North Wales**—25,000 members and 132 branches in an area of 8,500 square miles; and

**South Western**—7,000 members and 39 branches in an area of over 9,000 square miles.

Can we expect our members at Montgomery, for instance, to be concerned with the service conditions of Carlisle, any more than they are interested in those at Camborne? Yet Montgomery and Carlisle, separated by a distance of about 175 miles, are in the same district committee area. Do members at Moreton-in-the-Marsh have any common factor (other than the all-important one of their membership of a national association) with their district committee colleagues at Penzance, 250 miles away?

The recent conference between representatives of district committees and the N.E.C. at Leeds, which showed that a number of district committees were running their affairs at a financial loss, would have been a convenient opportunity for the N.E.C. to have examined all district committee areas, rather than to juggle with percentage rebates.

The main object, surely, of the district committee should be to strengthen our organisation by providing an effective link between the

branch and the N.E.C. The recent dock strikes indicated a considerable gap between the rank and file of the unions with their respective policy-forming national executive committees, and although that danger does not exist in NALGO, we must admit that a large number of our members are out of touch.

But is not this their own fault? Some may ask. It may be. After all, each branch has the right to send delegates to the district committee meetings, and those delegates should report back to the branch.

## HOLIDAY CENTRES RE-OPENING!

At least one advantage of winning the war, to cheer our austerity, and lighten the winter gloom, is the expected re-opening of the NALGO holiday centres, this year.

The Association aims to open Cayton Bay Centre, near Scarborough, Yorks, on April 19. Croyde Bay Centre, near Braunton, North Devon, is still in the hands of military authorities, but there is hope that it will be de-requisitioned early this year.

If that occurs, Croyde, too, may be open for Easter—it just depends on how much repair and renovation is necessary.

Terms, which will remain unchanged throughout the season, are

MEMBERS	NON-MEMBERS
£4 4s. p.w.; 12s. per day	£5 5s. p.w.; 15s. per day
CHILDREN	CHILDREN
Up to 4—£1 1s. p.w.; 3s. per day	£1 11s. 6d. p.w.; 4s. 6d. per day
5-10—£2 2s. p.w.; 6s. per day	£2 12s. 6d. p.w.; 7s. 6d. per day
11-14—£3 3s. p.w.; 9s. per day	£3 13s. 6d. p.w.; 10s. 6d. per day

Booking forms and details of restrictions on non-members can be had from branch secretaries or from Headquarters.

But have you ever been to a district committee meeting? If it is your first, you go with a feeling of some importance—rightly so. But what happens when you get there? You find yourself hemmed in by almost 100 other delegates, and all of you sit in rows rather like sheep listening, mostly, to a small number of people whose habit it is, you will find, more or less to run the district committee. The atmosphere is starchy, formal, the very antithesis of what it should be. And if a good discussion is started and you feel you want to take part, your attention will almost certainly be called to the time and the large number of items on the agenda. This sort of thing is inevitable with such a large gathering.

## A Committee for Each County?

The result is inevitable. In my own district committee, only just over half the branches have been sending delegates since about 1937, when I first attended. Are we to condemn out-of-hand those branches which do not send delegates? Would you like to travel anything up to 200 miles to attend a meeting which will be short which may be uninteresting, and which has already committed you to work a little extra during the following week to make up for the Saturday morning away from the office?

Clearly, the district committee areas—even the smallest of them—are too big. Would it not be better, then, to reduce the size of your present areas or, alternatively, to establish a committee for each county?

County committees would be "committees" in the true sense of the word, and would probably do more useful work than is being done at present by district committees. Each would have the same objects as the present district committee. It would be constituted in the same way, with branches electing a representative or representatives, according to their

membership. Except in Yorkshire, Lancashire, and Middlesex, the county committee would consist of between 12 and 40 members, assuming that branches of up to 50 members sent one delegate; of from 51 to 250 members sent two, of from 251 to 500 three, and so on. The three counties with large numbers of branches might be divided, or the branches might send fewer delegates. It is important that the committee should not be so big as to become a minor conference.

The county committee could deal adequately with all the problems within the county, and it could embark upon other activities which the present district committees, because of their size, are unable to undertake. Would it not, for example, be an admirable instrument for forging an effective public relations campaign within the district, and an educational programme? Further, since branch delegates would have shorter distances to travel, with consequent saving in time and money, would not those branches which now largely ignore the district committee be likely to show a greater interest? Meetings might be held more often than four times a year.

## Elections No Difficulty

But, it will be asked, if this were done, how should we elect our staffs' sides on the provincial councils and our N.E.C. members? That would present no difficulty.

For the provincial council, staff side seats, would be allocated to each county in proportion to membership, and the representatives would be elected by the county committee. This method would provide each county with representation and would correspond to the way in which the employers' side is elected.

It would be a simple matter to arrange a meeting of the NALGO members serving on a provincial council before each meeting of the staffs' side.

For the N.E.C., the county would also be the basis. There are approximately the same number of counties in England and Wales as there are members now on the N.E.C. Let each county with up to 3,000 members elect one member to the N.E.C., each county with more than 3,000 members elect two. Counties with fewer than, say, 1,000 members might combine with a neighbouring county. The three Lincolnshires could combine; the three Yorkshires (!); Cornwall could go with Devon, and so on. Certainly the N.E.C. should not be enlarged; it would be an advantage to reduce its size.

It is time, I suggest, that some serious thought were given to our organisation, and these suggestions—by no means rigid in their application—point a way towards strengthening NALGO.

We are a national association, and should stress the fact. That is why I feel that the decision to transfer officers of the old Part III education authorities to county branches is bad. These transferred members are likely to consider themselves as unconsidered pawns in a Headquarters' chess game.

We are a national association; as local government officers, we are soon to be subject to national conditions of service and, so far as branch membership is concerned, the only test will be that of convenience. Let the county officer working away from county hall belong for all purposes to the branch in the town where he is working. Give him the opportunity to play an active part in his own association. Let him become something more than a "ticket holder."

We cannot, and must never, have a system of mechanical organisation. It must be fluid; it must be able to adapt itself to the changing needs of its members; and, above all, it must be the means by which every member will feel he has the opportunity of shaping the Association's development.



## 6 A Unique Library and Books Advice Service for the L.G.O.

From a Correspondent

"IT'S an extraordinary thing," said a friend of mine to me the other day, "but some of the most energetic administrators I know never seem to have read half the important material of their own subject—I really believe that most of us are well-read only until we get our first big job."

That's the sort of provocative half-truth which makes one sit up and think—or at least it had that effect on me, and I hope that by putting it at the head of this article it will have the same effect on my readers.

It is true that for most of us it is by no means easy to keep up-to-date in our reading. We read our technical journals fairly carefully, and most of us keep a watchful eye on the daily papers. If we're closely engaged in local administration, we keep a still closer eye on the local newspapers, for it is there that we are likely to find ourselves the subject of comment.

It is also true that we are all overburdened with official reading matter. Circulars, directives, memoranda, pamphlets, regulations, and legislation, pour out of the government departments in a flood. Minutes, memoranda, estimates, and agenda papers from the departments of our own local authorities pile up in the "in" tray—and our own contributions to the tide go out to our colleagues.

But it was not to that sort of reading matter that my friend referred. It was to the published material which is to be found on the shelves of the bookshop and in the publishers' announcements. As he explained, we are in the thick of a period of great social change. Much attention is being given by publishers to questions of social, economic, and educational importance. Great social measures are coming forward in Parliament, and they can only be criticised and studied constructively if the critic is well-read and informed by some of the books which now appear in such quantities in the publishers' lists.

At once we are faced with two problems. How are we to select, for select we must if we are not to be overcome, and if we are to extract from our reading the material we most need? And how are we to get the books themselves when we want them?—for nowadays, books are often out of print before they are reviewed, or on loan from the local library at the time we need them.

It was to meet those two problems that the National Council of Social Service recently started its Library and Books Advice Service. Just as LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE, in its feature, "From My Bookshelf," picks out from the current publications those which are most likely to be of value to local government officers, so the librarian of the National Council of Social Service prepares, at regular intervals, book lists which select, over the wider field of the social services, including local government, the publications which are most likely to interest those of us who are engaged in one branch or another of social administration. The object of these book-lists is to give a speedy reference which will assist those who want to read up their subject or, perhaps more often, to study some related subject in a field which is close to their own, but in which they do not feel able to choose the best books without guidance. Given some pre-selection of this sort, it is much easier for us then to go to the bookshop or the public library, knowing more surely what books to seek.

But, having chosen our books, we often find it difficult to get them: the library may have a long waiting-list; and the bookseller is more than likely to meet us with "Sorry—out of print." Here, also the National Council of Social Service Library can help. It is a special library, affiliated to the Association of Special Libraries, and its object, like those of all special libraries, is to supplement existing provision through the public libraries and the National Central Library scheme. For those who are out of reach of London, where this library is housed, members can borrow books by post.

There is another service which a library of this kind can render to its members. Many of those engaged in public administration find themselves in London from time to time for meetings and conferences. A quiet corner, with the latest available literature on our own particular subject, within easy reach of the railway stations, and with a librarian who specialises in the social services to advise, may often prove a fruitful port of call and a useful and convenient place to spend an hour or two. The library at 32 Gordon Square, not far from Euston Station, offers its members just those simple facilities.

This is a new venture in constructive social

### SPECIAL TERMS FOR NALGO MEMBERS

NALGO is an organisation member of the N.C.S.S. Books Advice Service and Library, and its members are entitled to become individual subscribers at the reduced subscription of 10s. 6d. a year. For this they may:

- Use the library at 32, Gordon Square, London, W.C.1 (open Monday to Friday, 10 a.m. to 12.15 p.m. and 1.15 to 5.30 p.m. and Saturday, 9.30 to 12.30. (Telephone: Museum 8944).

- Borrow not more than two books at once, free of charge (the borrower paying return postage). Books are normally loaned for a month, but may be recalled within 14 days.

- Consult the librarian at any time.

- Receive free copies of regular lists of new books on social affairs and of the more important articles in journals and periodicals.

- Buy copies of annotated book lists, to be published from time to time.

Members wishing to subscribe to this service should apply to the Librarian, National Council of Social Service, 32, Gordon Square, London, W.C.1, sending the subscription fee of 10s. 6d. and stating that they are members of NALGO.

service. It is not meant to bring profits, but to provide a service of useful information and help, which, taken in conjunction with the public library services, will overcome those two problems "What shall I read?" and "Where can I get it?"

To return to my captious friend—surely the answer is that those of us who are engaged in social administration have our hands pretty full, but we can read—and we should read more—if we have the opportunities.

### NALGO Calls for Square Deal for P.A. Officers

NALGO is doing all in its power to secure transfer to the Ministry of National Insurance or appropriate compensation for those officers in local authority social welfare and public assistance departments whose work is to be taken over by the Ministry.

On December 18, after earlier representations had met with an unsatisfactory response, a strong deputation representing the Association, the National Association of Administrators of Local Government Establishments, the Local Government Clerks' Association, the Association of Chief Officers of Social Welfare, the National Association of Local Government Social Welfare Officers, and the Scottish Association of Social Welfare Officers, put the case to Mr. J. GRIFFITHS, Minister of National Insurance.

The deputation pointed out that, when full effect had been given to the Government's national insurance proposals, the work now performed by between 5,000 and 6,000 local officials would be transferred to the Ministry. Those officials are all highly trained and experienced in the work—including out-relief, welfare, and administration—which will be undertaken by the new Ministry. If they are not transferred, the work will have to be done by untrained civil servants, lacking their experience, while they themselves will become redundant. The local authorities now employing them will be compelled either to put them on to other work, for which they are themselves untrained or to pay them compensation for loss of office. The deputation therefore pressed for:

- Transfer to the appropriate Government department of all local government officers whose work is transferred to that department, on salaries and conditions not less favourable than those they now enjoy;

- Special consideration of experienced public assistance officers for appointments in the higher grades of the Ministry;

- Compensation for any monetary loss incurred by a local government officer because of the transfer of his work to a Government department; and

- Preservation of the pension rights of all transferred officers.

While the deputation was not satisfied with the answers given by the Minister, it did obtain from him a promise that, immediately the details of the National Insurance Bill were available, he would examine its effect, both short-term and long-term, on public assistance staffs, and would receive the deputation again, in conjunction with the Minister of Health.



A corner of the N.C.S.S. Library, available to any NALGO member for a subscription of 10s. 6d. a year.



## Planning, Housing, and Money : All about V.D. : A Local Government "Pelican"

## Outlook for Planning

ALTHOUGH it was ready for publication a year ago, it has only now been possible to issue Professor E. G. R. TAYLOR's *Planning Prospect* (Lund Humphries, 6s.). Do not be put off by the awkward shape of the book and its eccentric typography. It is a first-rate statement of the case for planning in all branches of our communal life. Professor Taylor quotes effectively from Mr. Churchill's 1943 speech on the Four Years' Plan:

"When peace came suddenly, as it did last time, there were no long carefully prepared plans for the future. That was one of the main reasons why . . . we fell into a dreadful trough of unemployment. We must not be caught that way again."

Professor Taylor's clear, logical method of presenting her argument and the variety of aspects of planning which she covers, make this little book the best general introduction to the subject that I know.

A special, though vital, branch of planning is dealt with in *The New Planning* (Faber), a small book containing a summarised report of the conference of the Town and Country Planning Association held a year ago. It is like a small and expensive cake (116 pages for 8s. 6d.) made of rather scrappy ingredients and enriched with a few choice plums; one of these forms the subject of an editorial note on page 2. The book should be in the library of housing and planning experts as a piece of historical documentation, but it is not likely to achieve wide circulation.

## Housing and Rents

THE books on housing are now so numerous that one looks at newcomers with a somewhat quizzical air. But Dr. M. J. ELIAS, in the second edition of *Housing Before the War and After* (Staples, 7s. 6d.), has something to say which justifies this addition to our crowded shelves. First, there is a mass of useful statistics about housing, clearly arranged and with pleasantly written and informative comment. The reasons why new houses are wanted are analysed—reduction of overcrowding, lack of building and repairs in wartime, higher social standards, and the growth in the number of separate families; and the extent of the need under each head is estimated. "The outlook," says Dr. Elias, "is not too bright"—the disintegration of the building trade, high prices of material, and lack of labour, are heavy items on the adverse side of the national building account. On the bright side, are the lower interest rates and a wider understanding of the problem. Dr. Elias thinks we can solve it and "this time we should not introduce half measures." The second special feature of the book is the chapter on differential rents. Dr. Elias pleads for a subsidy, nationally financed, for all citizens under a prescribed income level, to be applied proportionately to income and size of family; thus the burden falling on family men in direct proportion to the number of their children could be relieved. It implies a means test and it needs to be considered in relation to other ways of relieving the economic handicap of large families—children's allowances and social services specially related to family needs. But it is well worth examination.

## The National Income

A BOOK entitled *Redistribution of Incomes through Public Finance* in 1937, by T. BARNA (Oxford, 18s.) sounds awe-inspiring and remote from our everyday affairs. It is not easy reading, and many passages presuppose that the reader is a trained economist. On the other hand, the general theme is comprehensible enough. The book illustrates the invaluable uses to which a skilled economist and statistician can put the official data about national income and production which were available even in 1937 and which are now being issued more generously. Mr. Barna attempts to measure the extent to which public taxation (and the social services on which taxation was spent) lessened the inequalities in personal incomes. Before taxation, the inequalities were gross—a quarter of all income went to 4 per cent of the population—but the levelling up through taxation was less effective than is commonly believed; Mr. Barna calculates that only 5 or 6 per cent of the national income "changed hands." This is not much, and Mr. Barna remarks that the same result could have been achieved if the one and a half

million unemployed had been set to work. But much more by way of equalisation was necessary to wipe out of existence the large section of the population living below poverty level. These are only a few of the main conclusions; there are many others which deserve study. There are some useful by-products of Mr. Barna's analysis; he provides estimates of the amount of the national income and the way it was divided up, and the way capital was distributed among various



"Arising out of the minutes, Miss Smith reported that an advertisement had been inserted . . ."

## Cliché Competition

We offer a first prize of 10s. 6d. and a second prize of 5s. for the best administrative clichés suitable for illustration as above. Send entries to the editor, "Local Government Service," 24, Abingdon Street, London, S.W.1. The editor cannot return any entries, and his decision is final.

elements of the population. He gives an expert picture, too, of the extent of public expenditure and the objects on which it was laid out, as well as the other side of the medal—the incidence of various taxes.

## Plain Words

I THINK the author of the next book on my shelf would like me to say that it is plainly written, for plain people, by a plain man. It is called *People Who Live in Glass Houses*, by "V. D. Orderly" (HAROLD THOMAS, a member of the Grimsby branch of NALGO), and is published by the Central Council for Health Education at ninepence. In a conversational, almost barrack-room, manner, Mr. Thomas describes the venereal diseases, their causes, and their treatment. Its human, easy style, avoidance alike of prudishness and preaching, and the author's zeal for ridding the world of these curable ailments, combine to make it a most effective instrument of health education. Public Health colleagues will find it an invaluable aid in their work; indeed, it should be displayed in every public library and reading room in the country, and a copy given to every boy and girl, either on leaving school or on enrolment for national service. Mr. Thomas has done a difficult job with outstanding success—but that success will be of value only if his book achieves the widest possible circulation.

## Voluntary Service

WHEN I was very young in the local government service, we used to despise voluntary social workers; we called them patronising or sanctimonious nosey-parkers and thought we were much more efficient. I think that attitude has become far less common, partly because social work is more competently organised, partly because it is no longer administered in the spirit of Lady Bountiful, and partly because nowadays there is

a larger non-economic element in social work. Citizens' Advice Bureaux or Women's Institutes, for instance, provide little scope for the conferring of benefits *de haut en bas*, and they accordingly arouse none of the resentment which used to be directed against, say, the Charity Organisation Society. Yet the role of voluntary social bodies remains large and there are still many fields in which the State has not assumed full responsibility for meeting the needs of its citizens in distress. The new Nuffield College Reconstruction Survey is a study of *Voluntary Social Services* (Methuen, 16s.), edited by Miss A. F. C. BOURDILLON, who herself contributes some admirable essays. Other writers include Professor G. D. H. COLE and Dr. A. D. LINDSAY. In spite of Miss Bourdillon's modest caveat that the book's most striking feature is "the large number of gaps which it leaves," it is a stimulating and satisfactory study of the essentials of the subject. I can do no more here than commend heartily Professor Cole's historical studies, Dr. Lindsay's summary of the philosophy of the subject, and the detailed surveys of selected branches of voluntary effort. A well-written, carefully edited treatment of a subject which links closely with local government at many points.

## Local Government "Pelican"

THE inclusion in the popular Pelican series of a book entitled *Local Government* naturally seems to us in the service overdue. The gap has been filled by W. E. JACKSON, a graduate in law, a barrister, and an assistant clerk of the London County Council. This background may explain the somewhat legalistic approach, but Mr. Jackson is a practical man as well as a lawyer; he claims experience as an elected representative as well as an officer. The best feature of the book is the author's recognition of the fact that local government is everybody's business and he tries to write from the plain man's point of view. On the whole, he has produced a readable manual, and my only general criticism is that it would have been even more human if Mr. Jackson had a shade more of the ordinary rank-and-file in his make-up; he writes a little too much from the point of view of the man at the top trying to see things with the eye of the humble citizen but not quite succeeding.

## Manchester Today—and Tomorrow

THE *City of Manchester Plan* (published for the corporation by Jarrold & Sons, no price stated) is an outstanding addition to the far-sighted schemes which are being prepared for our blitzed cities; as a piece of printing and book-production alone it will give pleasure to all who see it. Manchester's problems naturally have much in common with those of the other bloated industrial towns, but there are special features; I select an example—the leaders of Manchester's commerce and business all live outside; there is no "West End," and the city plan would provide a good residential area round Ancoats, Longsight, and Moss Side, where now are obsolete congested terrace houses. This Plan improves on the County of London Plan in that, by its emphasis on what is to be done first, and next, and next, it gives a greater air of probability. The reader will be led to agree with its conclusion that good planning pays (financially as well as in terms of health and welfare) and that drastic amendments to the law relating to the use of land are needed to make the plan realisable. The corporation has also, very wisely, got out an admirable illustrated summary edition at 3s. which is a model for books of its kind and should help to win for the plan wider interest and support.

## Tame Politics

I SHOULD have thought that, whether as politicians or as idealists, the LABOUR PARTY would do best to present their aims in as colourful and crusading a light as possible; they have not done this in their *Local Government Handbook* 1945-46 (Labour Party, Transport House, S.W.1, 1s. 6d.) which marshals its facts in a colourless and largely impartial manner. Only when the writers tell of the higher infant mortality rates in poorer areas does the reader get any idea of what the Labour Party is all about. Otherwise, the book can be regarded as a not too brilliant addition to the list of factual statements about local government, bang up to date but otherwise undistinguished and not in the same class, for power and imagination, with the policy publications from the other branch of Transport House which appeared at the time of the recent Trades Union Congress.





"JIMINY Cricket, it's a body!" Daffy tottered backwards from the door in the hope of fainting on some manly chest, but consciousness failed her by sticking stubbornly by her. Besides, there was no one near except George and myself.

I must admit that, as I rushed across the room, my principal emotion was of resentment. I had often played with the notion of murdering somebody some day with the aid of that door. Its glass, as seen from my desk, was robbed of transparency by a reflection from the windows, and all I had to do was to work out how I should (a) entice the victim into the doorway, (b) silence him, and (c) make my escape. But apparently somebody had got a jump ahead of me.

"Feel his pulse, George."

"Ought I to wear black at the inquest?"

"Here's his identity bracelet. What a funny name—*Probono Publico*."

A groan came from the man stretched out on our mat, and a little colour came into cheeks which looked as if normally they might be true letter-to-the-editor purple.

"Oh, he's alive!" After much panting and effort by all of us, *Probono* achieved an upright position, mopping such of his person as was not covered by a mangled top-hat.

"Made a New Year resolution to take some interest in this local government business," he wheezed. "Thought I'd look you up and perhaps concoct some Spontaneous Public Indignation about the way you waste our money. But, snap me, if I didn't find you all working like niggers." He started mopping again as if the recollection were too much for him.

The others turned away coldly, but I lingered. "I insist on your having medical attention, sir," I said. "You've had a bad shock, and it's up to us to take some interest in you now." (I thought it as well to be careful—Alderman Jove's family has wide connections and you never know whose relative anyone is.)

"It's remarkable," *Probono* confided to me on the way to our municipal hospital. "I've paid rates for thirty years and at last I'm getting some benefit."

The doctor pronounced him perfectly fit, apart from blood pressure brought on by the number of hours he had to spend in the hospital waiting-room.

"I'm so glad you don't require to come into hospital," the doctor sighed, scribbling his prescription. "I don't know how we'd have managed it."

"Don't know how you'd have—" spluttered *Probono*. "Young man, do you realise how long I've been a ratepayer?"

Without a word, the doctor led us to a streamlined but empty ward, rather like the one in which the Heroine (Leading Surgeon's Right-Hand Woman in Broadway makeup) finds the Hero all smashed up (but not, providentially, about the profile), and devotedly nurses him into marriage. "Beautiful," I said. "When will it be ready for occupation?"

"It's ready now, but we can't use it. Look!" He threw open a door to reveal a chromium-plated apparatus. "Our new mass-radiography outfit."

"The one Alderman Jove said so much about in his election speeches?"

"Yes—it keeps finding us people who are ill, but we've no one to nurse them."

"Do you mean to say—of all the incompetent—so *this* is local government!" *Probono* marched off with the air of a man about to refuse to pay his rates for the joy of explaining in court exactly why he refuses to pay them.

Whether by his efforts or not, there appeared in the local and national press the following day a frantic S O S for a nurse or nurses for our town, which was described as a salubrious area with a remarkable health record. In what way our record was remarkable was not made clear, but it was hinted that no one was ever ill and the nurse could spend her days sitting with her feet

up and reading "Even a Germ will Terminate."

No one hoped for much from the advertisement, but a few days later Miss Gymbol came out of the Boss's room with a letter which she flourished before us with complete abandon.

The letter was from our next-door borough, with whom we jointly own a steam road-roller on the principle of the man who feels that he has a share in a neighbour's lawn-mower, which he uses far more than the neighbour who merely paid for it. The message was brief; it said they could no longer extend the loan of their road-rolling machine to a cart-load of snakes-in-the-grass who would inveigle their nurse from under their noses while their backs were turned.

"Nurse—then we've got her!" I jubilated.

"At last I can have my appendix out," beamed Miss Gymbol.

"Do you suppose plastic surgery could do sump'n for my nose?" asked Daffy hopefully.

The whole town took Nurse Cramp's advent in the same way. Parents thankfully stopped handing out the whiskered Stork Yarn and went back to the one about the Nurse's Black Bag. Measles reached the level of 1,090,167 spots per square inch of child, and influenza moved in like an unwelcome relative who, having been put off at Christmas, appears inevitably on the day spring-cleaning was scheduled to begin.

Mr. *Probono Publico* developed a boil on his neck; it had to be dressed every day and, because Nurse Cramp suggested that his wife might perform this service, he Rallied the Ratepayers with a campaign demanding that municipal employees be taught to Know Their Place.

"What do you think we pay rates for?" was his theme song—till someone made the happy discovery that he himself lived just outside the town and paid county rates, which were less than ours.

Meantime, the Mayor, Alderman Jove, and most of the citizens tried to ensure that our nurse was well supplied with nylon stockings, M-x F—r makeup, and other necessities. We scarcely saw her except as a figure flying back and forward to the hospital.

Then, one day, she appeared in our office, her jaw clenched as if she contemplated some terrible deed, such as getting married as an excuse for throwing up her job.

"You!" she said through her teeth, while glaring in my direction. "You've got to help me."

"C-certainly," I felt that the town's fate lay in the hollow of my hand.

"I've worked thirty hours a day for this town—"

"Yes, yes—"

"I've done everything for them, and what do I get for it?"

"Full Rushcliffe scales and—"

"They have the nerve to engage the matron I used to serve under—I left my last job because of her."

"Oh, but you mustn't leave this one, I—"

"I'll bet she's followed me for spite. She made my life a misery with her rules and regulations—"

"Well, look here, I'll show you how to murder her—I'll even help you. Just get her into that doorway and—"

"No—I'm driven to desperate measures."

I might have known. Just as I had plucked up courage to have an operation for the removal of "Mary" which had been tattooed on my er—person since my bachelor days (my wife's name is Ethel) this blow had to fall. We'd lose the nurse and everyone would blame me, whereas—

Nurse Cramp was opening up her bag. *Suicide*, I thought suddenly, and made ready to grasp from her nerveless fingers the knife or poison phial which might emerge. But it was something thin and black; she screwed off its top to reveal—a fountain pen.

"Get me a form," she said grimly. "They've pushed me just too far—I'm going to join NALGO!"

## AT RANDOM

By "Hyperion"

### O Si Sic Omnes!

Eton rural councillors will revert to morning meetings—because they feel sleepy in the afternoon.—*News Item*.

### Cow Huncher

Everyone in the village had vainly searched for a lost cow. Finally the local nitwit went out and brought her in.

"How did you find her so quickly?" the owner asked in surprise.

"Why," the nitwit explained, "I jest thought if I were a cow where I'd go, and I went there and there she were."—*New Zealand Weekly News*.

### Epitaph to a Public Man

*Stranger, if you desire to know  
What end was his who lies below,  
On far too many Chairs he sat  
And died worn out by merely that.*

—Sir Henry Newbolt.

### Champion Gargler

"Peter," said Barbara, "is very well. He's gone into his long woolly pants, and as long as he keeps up with his gargling I see no reason why he shouldn't get through the winter."

"Is he a gargler?"

"A gargler?" said Barbara. "My dear, he's the biggest gargler in the North-western postal district. He's got stamina, if you understand me. He's the sort of gargler who never throws away the drop in the bottom of the glass. He sees the thing through. It shakes the bathroom when he's really firing on both tonsils."

"And does it stop him from having colds and things?"

"There's no means of telling. You see, I don't know how many he'd have if he didn't gargle. It couldn't be any more."

—From "Mine Own Executioner," Nigel Balchin.

### Whitehall Wit

The head of a Whitehall department sent minute to his staff for noting. When it was returned, a pencilled observation on the margin, the work of a junior, read: "I object to sentences which end with a preposition."

The chief added underneath: "This is an impertinence I won't put up with," and sent it round again. There was no further comment!

### It Pays to Advertise

Semi-corpulent officer (27) wants three weeks weight-reducing work, country (? tree-cutting) in exchange for accommodation.—*Advt. in The Times*.

Semi-corpulent officer is overwhelmed with hundreds of kind offers, and finds it well nigh impossible to reply at once.—*ibid* (a few days later).

### Marx Minor

Father: "What do you mean by playing truant? Why did you stay away from school?"

Son: "Class hatred, father."

### Hint for American Gourmets

A moth-ball dropped into English coffee and stirred briskly with a spoon will make it more palatable.

### Esprit de Corps

**WALKING** with a soldier with a cheetah in his cap is an adventure. We turn into Piccadilly or up the Strand, and every now and again somebody comes tearing after us, panting, and touches my escort on the shoulder.

They salute, they smile, they shake hands like long-lost brothers, and they start off together: "Where was it I saw you last? Were you out at Blankety Corner? Well, I was the second lieutenant on that gun site!"

Reply: "By jove, you were, were you?" Delighted. Satisfied. They pass on. How I envy them this comradeship.

Would any woman ever hold me up with a cheery grin, not knowing my name from Adam, to say, "Where did I see you last? Were you the lady behind me in the fish queue at Kingston Market in '42, that day we got sole?" No, I'm afraid not.

—Fey M. Hawke, in "The Sunday Express."



## "People's Moot" on P.R. : How to Pack Your A.G.M.: Keeping Touch with the "Temps."

AN encouraging sign of the times, for those eager to arouse a livelier interest in citizenship, is the modern development of civic societies, citizens' associations, and the like. Organisations of this kind are springing up everywhere just now, and, provided they open their membership to all classes and do not degenerate into "pressure groups" for sectional interests, they can do nothing but good.

A good example is the rather preciously named "People's Moot," formed in Esher, Surrey, and now spreading into many surrounding districts. Its aims include:

To endeavour to achieve a more vital democracy by providing the means whereby all citizens can express their views in an organised body for the guidance of local and national authorities; and

To bring the results of discussion, where necessary or desirable, to the notice of the appropriate governing bodies, and to provide a forum of public opinion to which these bodies can refer specific problems.

The moot is organised on three levels. First, there is the local moot, essentially a discussion group formed by a number of neighbours and meeting monthly. It sends one or more representatives to a ward moot, and the ward moot in turn sends up to three representatives to the district moot, covering the whole of a local authority's area.

How it works is shown by a recent example. A questionnaire on local government was sent to local moots. These considered it and passed their answers to the ward moots, which in turn passed their answers to the district moot. The district moot considered the questions and the answers afresh and reached conclusions on them; these conclusions will be sent to the local authorities for the area and to other organisations likely to be interested.

The conclusions are of special interest to branch public relations officers. Ward moots and district moots alike agreed, almost unanimously, that local government would benefit from keener public interest, and that local authorities should publicise their services and encourage instruction in and discussion of local government affairs. In the light of points made by the ward moots in amplification of this policy, the district moot decided to press for:

Advance publication of agenda of council meetings and of committee recommendations;  
Instruction on local government in the schools;  
Encouragement of discussion groups;  
Full publicity for local government affairs; and  
Greater availability of committee and council minutes and reports.

From the above it is clear that in the Esher district at least, the field for public relations is a fertile one.

### Brains Trust Brain-waves

THAT it is equally fertile elsewhere is amply demonstrated by the success attending branch activities in places as widely separated as Blackpool and Coventry.

Blackpool recently held another most successful brains trust on "Your Town of the Future." The "brains" consisted of two councillors, two officers, a woman chosen to represent the woman's point of view, and an anonymous "Mr. Citizen," selected from applicants responding to an open invitation to represent the "man in the street." Publicity was ensured by inviting the editor of the "Blackpool Evening Gazette" to act as question-master—a real brain-wave this!—and the affair seems to have been a tremendous success. Twenty questions were answered, ranging from the desirability of municipal breweries to the reasons for the failure of women in public life.

The value of enlisting the support of a local newspaper was again demonstrated at Coventry, where the latest brains trust, last month, was run by the "Coventry Evening Telegraph," and secured a brilliant team of "brains" including the mayor, R. H. S. CROSSMAN, M.P., and six officers, under the B.B.C.'s DONALD McCULLOUGH as question-master.

### 500 Members at a Branch A.G.M.

CAN any other branch, I wonder, equal Croydon's latest achievement of getting 500 members—more than 60 per cent of its total civilian membership—to its annual meeting? The secret? In the opinion of Leslie Moir,

Croydon's "mighty atom" of a branch secretary, there is not one, but five:  
Early and ample publicity;  
A first-class annual report;  
Free tea—and a bar;  
An entertainment; and  
Widening of interest in branch work.  
Preparations for the meeting began some weeks



Laying the foundation stone—1945 style

in advance. After a preliminary announcement in the August number of the branch magazine, big posters appeared on all staff notice boards, and so that these should not become stale, they were replaced by more colourful ones nearer the date.

Then the refreshments. The wives of twelve colleagues agreed to start preparing tea three hours before the meeting (held in Croydon's magnificent municipal officers' club). Sufficient crockery was "begged, borrowed, or stolen." An extra bar was specially installed. Professional artists were engaged for a sing-song-cum-smoking concert to follow the meeting. The mayor and town clerk were persuaded to attend and speak.

The executive prepared a most impressive report, neatly stencilled on 26 quarto pages, enclosed in a printed cover of stiff art paper, and containing a comprehensive review of branch activities under 55 separate headings. In his summons to the meeting, Mr. Moir issued an open challenge to critics to air their grievances and invited them to submit their questions in advance so that the executive would have no excuse for the "I must have notice of that" gag.

So well did the arrangements work that the whole 500 were fed in half an hour. The business meeting lasted for 2½ hours, leaving another hour for the concert. And the cost? "About £25 of which £17 goes into our own club." Analysing the reasons for this success, Mr. Moir tells me: "I do not think that either the free tea or the free entertainment had any bearing; but I do think that an annual meeting on licensed premises has a greater chance of success than one in a town hall. More important is the build-up of the social side. A good annual report plays a big part."

"Most important of all is the widening of interest in branch work, and giving more members a job to do. We have committees in each department. They meet once a month, just before the executive, and, in addition to helping in all branch activities, they iron out many smaller difficulties, and have made many good suggestions to the executive. The result is that we now have several additional and enthusiastic helpers in each department."

"We are now considering how to throw open the executive meetings to a 'gallery' of interested members (reserving the right, of course, to discuss special items 'in camera'). Perhaps other branches have tried this out. If so, I would welcome comments on their experience."

### Retaining Old Friends

INCIDENTALLY, Croydon is determined not to lose touch with the many "temporaries"

who have formed a big proportion of the staff during the war, and many of whom are now or will soon be leaving. To ensure the maintenance of "our many friendly contacts for many years to come," the executive has appointed a special liaison officer, who is compiling a list of all temporaries who wish to retain their contacts. They will be invited to share in all branch social activities, will be allowed, with their husbands or wives, to join or remain members of the officers' club and sports club, and will be supplied with LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE and the branch magazine (in which space will be reserved for news from or of interest to them). In addition, it is proposed to hold two or three reunions each year. The ex-temporaries will not be asked to pay any subscription for all this—other than the ordinary extra subscriptions for club membership.

### Is this a Record?

The Oldham branch of NALGO held its 46th annual general meeting on December 17.

### Agricultural Advisers

WHILE welcoming the inauguration of the National Agricultural Advisory Service, set up by the Minister of Agriculture to take over part of the work of giving free technical advice to farmers hitherto performed by county councils and war agricultural executive committees, NALGO has joined with the Institution of Professional Civil Servants in protesting against the salary scales proposed. A number of members are likely to be transferred to this new service.

The Minister is offering salaries in six main grades ranging, in the country, from £140—£320 to £850—£1,100. The higher of these grades will be restricted to officers with 1st or 2nd class honours degrees in basic science. Yet, for the scientific civil service, composed of men with similar scientific qualifications, the proposed new provincial scales range from £255—£470 to £1,100—£1,300 (excluding the highest specialist posts).

In NALGO's view, this implied differentiation between agricultural science and other branches of science is likely to prejudice the new service from the start, since it will mean that the best university students will be discouraged from taking agricultural science, notwithstanding its vital importance to the future of farming.

It is encouraging to find the farmers themselves agreeing with this view. A writer in the "Farmer's Weekly" of December 7, after expressing doubt whether the Minister would find enough men of the right calibre to staff the service, added:

"I share the doubts of the Institution of Professional Civil Servants and the National Association of Local Government Officers, whether the salaries offered, at any rate for the lower grades (whence will come the field men in daily contact with farmers) will be good enough to attract the best type of men. The Ministry will inevitably find itself in competition with commerce. I firms . . . and such firms don't boggle over an odd hundred a year provided they get the right man."

### Matron a la Mode?

"Applications are invited for the position of assistant matron in the Infectious Diseases Hospital, Burnley (106 beds) . . . salary £325 to £370 per annum, less £1,200, value of emoluments"—Adv.

### First "Beano" Wanted

HAS any member a copy of the first number of "Beano," published by the Scarborough branch in aid of the Benevolent and Orphan Fund in 1, believe, 1937? If so, Dr. DONALD E. MORLEY, medical officer of health at Cheltenham, is willing to pay up to 5s. for it, to complete his set.

### Not on the Level

"Although from the outside it looks a palatial building, the inside is like a pauper's home. A penny rolled in one of the rambling rooms would run with violence to the other side, so far from level are the floors"—Mr. L. FRANKS, chairman of Esher U.D.C., on the council's offices.

### Honouring the President

Wolverhampton and district branch is giving a dinner and dance on January 25, in honour of F. H. HARROD, NALGO's president. It will be held in the Civic Hall, and leading members of neighbouring local authorities have been invited.

### More Lieutenant-Colonels

NALGO, it would appear, is overflowing with lieutenant-colonels, all risen from the ranks, and all under 31. My recent reference to two, aged 31 and 29 respectively, has brought news of three more:

J. ATKINSON, who joined the Royal Marines as a private in 1940 (when he was attired to the town



clerk of Cheltenham), was commissioned in 1941, served on the staff at Cairo and Colombo, was promoted major after return to Britain in 1940, took part in the invasion and the Rhine crossings, and became a Lt.-colonel last April, aged 28.

**E. A. BURN**, former assistant sanitary inspector at Stourbridge, who joined the R.A.M.C. as a private in 1940, was commissioned in 1942, became a major in 1944, and Lt.-colonel last year, also at the age of 28. Attached to G.H.Q., New Delhi, he is in charge of meat distribution and storage for the whole of the Far East.

**GEORGE G. WATSON**, formerly of the town clerk's office, Coatbridge, who enlisted as a private in 1939, was commissioned in 1940, became a major in 1942 and Lt.-colonel last year, also at 28. He was recently released under Class B, and was immediately appointed deputy town clerk of Coatbridge.

Who says now that the local government officer is an unenterprising plodder, always playing for safety, and incapable of responsibility?

#### Congratulations to—

**H. G. BODY**, lately vice-president of Kensington branch, on his election as mayor of Heston and Isleworth.

**R. EGLINGTON**, on having completed 24 years as treasurer of the Norfolk branch. He has just retired from that office.

**R. EVANS, D.P.A., F.R.V.A.**, rating and valuation officer to Blackwell, R.D.C., and an East Midlands representative on the N.E.C., on his appointment as clerk to his council on the retirement of **W. S. COCKERHAM** who had been clerk for 40 years.

**F. C. HILL**, lately surveyor to Warrington R.D.C., on his appointment as surveyor to Eton R.D.C.

**ARTHUR HOLLIS**, lately assistant surveyor to Uckfield R.D.C., on having completed 49 years of local government service. Mr. Hollis retired last October.

**N. L. JAGGAR**, formerly deputy city engineer, surveyor, and water engineer, Lancaster, on his appointment as engineer and surveyor, Settle R.D.C.

**ERNEST MOORE**, on completing 31 years as secretary of the Halifax branch, and 25 years as member of the Yorkshire district committee and the provincial council. Mr. Moore, who has just retired, is believed to have served as branch secretary longer than any other man in the Association's history.

**A. G. TRUSS**, deputy chief inspector of weights and measures at Smethwick, founder member and former secretary and president of Smethwick branch, and for some time secretary of the West Midland district committee, on completion of 37 years' service. Mr. Truss, also, has just retired.

### FOUNDER OF GLASGOW

#### BRANCH DEAD

#### Mr. Alexander Walker

WE regret to record the death in London on November 19, at the age of 79, of **ALEXANDER WALKER, C.B.E., D.L., J.P.**, former city assessor of Glasgow, founder of the Glasgow branch, and one of Scotland's first representatives to the N.E.C.

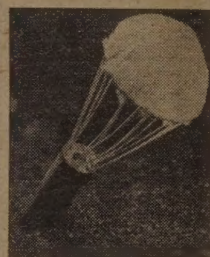
Alexander Walker spent the whole of his career in the service of Glasgow corporation. Entering the town clerk's office in 1884, he rose to the position of town clerk depute before being appointed city assessor in 1908. He retired in 1935, after 51 years' service.

It was in 1919, when N.A.L.G.O. was beginning to recover from the serious setback of the 1914-18 war, that Mr. Walker founded the Glasgow branch, and from that moment he appeared as an outstanding personality in the Association's affairs. The following year saw him elected unopposed to the N.E.C.—where he immediately became chairman of the law and parliamentary committee—appointed solicitor for Scotland, and made first vice-chairman of the newly-created Scottish joint industrial council.

In all these posts he made his mark. He gave Glasgow branch its own Benevolent and Orphan Fund, later merged into the national fund, was a leader in the fight for the 1922 Superannuation Act and for compensation for loss of office, and helped to develop Whitleyism in Scotland, where, in 1925, he devoted his annual holiday to a special propaganda tour. He was nominated for the vice-presidency of the Association in 1924 and would undoubtedly have attained the Association's highest office but for his decision to resign all his official appointments in 1925.

## Middlesex Sewage Helped to Burn Berlin?

LOCAL government's share in winning the war was not restricted to civil defence and the maintenance of morale on the home front. In countless other ways, direct and indirect, it played its part in the great mobilisation of national effort now finding its apotheosis in the Nuremberg trials. Last month, we told how two Bermondsey Corporation water-carts helped to win the Battle of France. This month we have an even stranger story—how Middlesex sewage helped to burn Hitler's Reich.

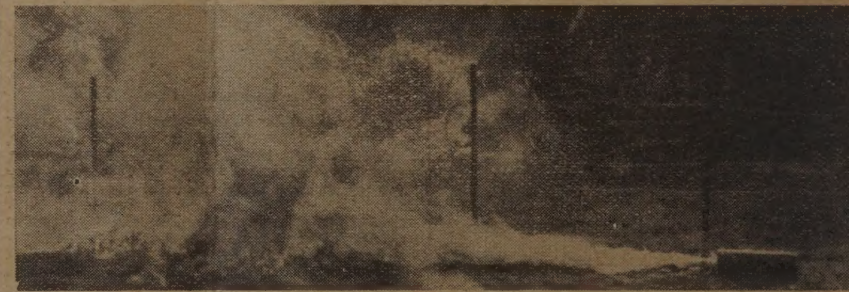


The bomb with its parachute.

It began early in the war, when scientists were asked to produce an incendiary bomb much better than the magnesium or thermite bomb which, as every fireguard knows, can be blotted out with a sandbag or controlled with a stirrup-pump. After intensive research by experts of the Ministries of Home Security and Aircraft Production, together with chemists of Leeds University and Imperial Chemical Industries, they solved the problem—a solution of methane gas in petrol under pressure.

The petrol was easy. But what about the methane—more familiar to the layman as marsh gas, cause of the bubbles which rise to the surface when you stir up a stagnant pond, and of the "will-o'-the-wisp," that legendary dancing light that lures travellers to destruction in bogs and marshes?

Happily, there is an enormous supply in big sewage works, where the gas is produced in quantity during the fermentation of sewage.



The methane-filled incendiary burning after ignition.

The great Middlesex main drainage works at Mogden produces nearly 500 million cubic feet a year. Much of it is used to operate the gas engines in the power station, and shortly before the war ways were being sought to use the surplus, both in heating the buildings and in driving motor vehicles. By 1942, the difficulties had been overcome and a compressing plant had been built capable of supplying eight million cubic feet of gas a year—equivalent to 50,000 gallons of petrol—to owners of vehicles in Middlesex.

In the same year the new bomb had been perfected and, since the Mogden gas compressing plant was the only one in the country able to supply sufficient methane of high concentration, the Ministry of Aircraft Production earmarked its output. The gas was compressed into balloon barrage cylinders and transported to the I.C.I. factory where the bombs were made.

The bomb itself is a cylinder 21 in. long by 5½ in. wide, weighs 30 lb., and is dropped by parachute. On ignition, it emits a jet of intensely hot flame 15 ft. long and 2 ft. wide and, burning for two minutes. The Germans found no means of extinguishing it nor of combating its effects.

The bomb played a big part in the destruction of Berlin, Stettin, Kiel, Hamburg, Königsberg and other German cities. In the Königsberg raid, on August 26, 1944, only methane bombs were used.

Notwithstanding this concentration of production on war purposes, the staff at Mogden have continued their experiments on the peacetime use of methane as a motor fuel. In a paper read to the Institute of Sewage Purification on Nov. 30 (from which the above facts were taken), Mr. W. Parker, the chief mechanical and electrical engineer, described how it had been successfully used to drive five lorries, seven vans, and one staff car, at a cost comparing favourably with the present price of petrol. Several of the local authorities are using methane to drive vehicles, and the system may be worthy of development should the price of petrol remain high.

### West Riding Tribute to Harry Allen.

WARM tribute to the work for N.A.L.G.O. of **HARRY ALLEN**, whose resignation from the N.E.C. we recorded in November, was paid by his former colleagues in the West Riding branch at a complimentary dinner in the staff club, Wakefield, on November 2.

**L. TATTERSALL**, branch vice-president, was in the chair, and the N.E.C. was represented by **F. H. HARROD** (president), **E. L. RILEY** (chairman, service conditions committee), **C. A. W. ROBERTS** (chairman, staff-side, Rushcliffe committee), **A. BOLTON** and **W. R. BEEVERS**.

**W. MOXON** proposed Mr. Allen's health, and in a racy and witty speech traced his career from his junior days to the present day, and acclaimed his work for the branch. Mr. Allen was presented with a silver cake-dish and a note-filled wallet.

Replying, Mr. Allen referred to the happy times he had had in the service of the branch, reviewed some of the difficulties experienced, and appealed for a strong and virile organisation for the future. He acknowledged the great assistance he had received from his wife, who was present and was warmly welcomed.

**F. H. HARROD** referred to the outstanding work of Mr. Allen in the national sphere, particularly stressing his service outlook and devotion to Whitleyism, and appealed to branches to show sympathy and understanding in dealing with their colleagues returning from the Forces. Other speakers included **J. R. McDONALD**, deputy treasurer, West Riding C.C., **A. N. STOCKDALE**, and **A. C. ROBERTS**. The whole gathering made it clear beyond doubt that Harry Allen is a prophet both known and honoured in his own country.

### NEW TREASURER FOR NALGO

#### Mr. J. H. Robinson Appointed

**J. H. ROBINSON, F.I.M.T.A., F.S.A.A.**, city treasurer of Leeds, has accepted the invitation of the N.E.C. to become honorary treasurer of N.A.L.G.O. in succession to **S. WHITEHEAD**, lately borough treasurer of Hammersmith, who has retired from the service.

Mr. Robinson has had a long and distinguished career in local government, in which he has now served for 32 years. Starting his career in Hull in 1913, he became assistant to the city treasurer at Bristol in 1923, assistant to the treasurer at Liverpool in 1926, borough treasurer of Huddersfield in 1933, and entered his present post in 1938. He has been a member of the Association for many years, and was president of Leeds branch in 1939-40.

#### Miss E. Dawson Re-elected

The Yorkshire district has elected **Miss E. DAWSON** to the N.E.C., in the place of **HARRY ALLEN**, who resigned recently. Miss Dawson thus returns to the council after an absence of only six months. She was elected in the separate poll for women, declared in June, but in view of the fact that two women members had been elected in the normal election, was unable to take her seat.

As a result of Miss Dawson's election, the N.E.C. now contains, for the first time in its history, three women members, all elected by the normal machinery, in open competition with men.



# Can We Help to Alleviate Winter Distress in Europe? 11

AT the annual general meeting of the East Ham branch, the following resolution was carried:

"That this branch recognises, firstly, that without prompt and large-scale outside assistance, many thousands of people, including large numbers of children on the continent of Europe, will die this winter of starvation, sickness, or exposure, and secondly, that in the event of such a catastrophe, the repercussions upon this country might gravely compromise internal recovery, and in particular the development of our social services.

"That this branch urges the National Executive Council to add the full weight of the Association, as a body representative of a typical cross-section of public opinion, to the already impressive evidence of public concern, by making immediate representations to His Majesty's Government with the dual object of:

(a) assuring the Government that the overwhelming mass of public opinion expects them to take official action to alleviate distress in Europe and will be with them in any reasonable steps that they may take; and

(b) securing facilities by which voluntary effort on the part of the people of this country may be brought to the aid of the people on the continent; in particular, in offering temporary hospitality for children."

The branch feels that, by bringing to the attention of the Government the feelings of various bodies of citizens, action may be accelerated to alleviate the terrible conditions which may arise in Europe, and I am accordingly directed to ask that the attention of the National Executive Council be drawn to the terms of the resolution, and that they be given publicity in the next issue of LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE, with a request that other branches give their support thereto.

East Ham Branch. W. A. ADKINS,  
Hon. Gen. Secretary.

## THOSE NON-MEMBERS

### Should We Outlaw Them?

SHARE-OUT night at the "local." "There you are, George," says the treasurer, "that's your little lot." "Now, Jack, your turn—sign on the dotted line." "Hallo, Joe, what d'you want? Your share? Don't be daft, there's none for you—you haven't paid in anything—you don't belong to it."

How many Joes are there in the Service? Many—too many. And yet they lap up all the benefits which NALGO has won for them. Have you heard of a non-member not having his war bonus? Have you heard of a non-member not enjoying the conditions of service which NALGO has won for him?

It's all wrong, and we know it's wrong. You don't expect to draw benefit from NALGO Insurance if you don't belong. You don't expect to get assistance from the Benevolent Fund if you are not a member. You don't expect to be assisted by the NALGO Building Society if you don't belong. Why, then, should those who won't join NALGO ride in on the backs of others?

A militant NALGO, not afraid to take courage in both hands can, I believe, right this wrong. We live in days of joint negotiation. Salaries, and conditions of service are arrived at by joint negotiation between representatives of employers and employees. In the service joint machinery, NALGO representatives predominate on the staff side. To NALGO falls the brunt, and the honour, of "blazing the path of a contented service." In the suggestions put forward from time to time, in the results of joint negotiation, NALGO has shown its worth and courage. One is almost tempted to say that NALGO has succeeded too well in that members and non-members alike accept hard-won fruits casually.

Joint negotiation has brought to near reality a national scale of salaries and service conditions, but let us be honest and admit that NALGO though speaking for the vast majority of officers, cannot speak for all—logically, it can speak only for its own members. We are not weakening our position by this admission—we shall weaken it only by burying our heads in the sand and not facing facts. Is NALGO sufficiently courageous and confident to mount one step higher and advocate that those benefits and conditions of service, arrived at by joint negotiation with staff side representatives, shall apply only to those whom the representatives represent? Contentious, I know, but we cannot yet expect employing

authorities to stipulate that their staffs shall be members of NALGO or its allied associations, with whose representatives they negotiate. As a compromise, what could be more reasonable than to confine the benefits to those who obtain them?

What are the advantages and objections?

**Advantages.**—A finer appreciation by members and non-members alike of the benefits NALGO has secured, and an undoubted resurgence of enthusiasm and rise in membership figures. (No more unpaid subscriptions!)

**Objections.**—It might be contended that piecemeal decisions would be difficult to operate and

## READERS' FORUM

Letters for the February journal should reach the Editor, 24 Abingdon Street, London, S.W.1., not later than Friday, January 18th.

cause discontent. But I cannot see any insurmountable difficulties. What could be simpler than to pay cost-of-living bonus to members of the Association and its "allies" only, and to give, say, three weeks' annual holiday to members and two weeks to non-members? There would be an obvious remedy for those aggrieved non-members.

Did I hear the word "blackmail"? No more blackmail than no insurance benefits for non-members or no Building Society benefits for non-members.

To those who might complain that all this stress upon "bread-and-butter" membership of NALGO is sordid when considered against the ideal of "service to the community," I would say: Let us face facts: the Association is aiming inter alia, to secure the finest conditions for members, which will redound to the reputation of the Service generally, and a contented, happy worker, being a good worker, is the finest servant a local authority and the ratepayer can have.

"Brickbats and Bouquets" will doubtless hurtle in response to the above suggestion, but honest criticism and sincere argument will do much to bring out the best for the benefit of all.

Devon County Council. G. E. RIVERS.  
Staff Association.

## NALGO CHRISTMAS CARDS

### Over £2,500 for Benevolent Fund!

THE phenomenal success of this recent venture on behalf of the Benevolent and Orphan Fund prompts me to take the earliest opportunity of tendering my personal thanks to all those who contributed.

The idea sprang from the artistic brain of J. FAWCETT of the South Shields branch, a valued member of the B. & O. Fund Committee, and the designs were executed by GEORGE MC VAY, B. & O. correspondent of the South Shields branch.

I understand that more than 200,000 copies of the cards were sold and that many thousands more could have been disposed of had the material been available. As it is, I believe the Fund will benefit to the extent of more than £2,500.

I must apologise to all those who could not be supplied from our limited quota, and also for our inability to supply envelopes. Next year, we hope to get on to the job earlier, to obtain a greater range of designs, and to supply actual samples to each branch, together, of course, with the envelopes.

Now that certain restrictions have been removed, we hope in future years to secure adequate supplies for all who require them.

One final word of thanks to the staff at headquarters who worked long hours in promptly despatching the cards, and to the hundreds of branch secretaries who so loyally and energetically co-operated in the scheme.

The Castle, R. T. SHEARS,  
Exeter. Chairman, Benevolent and Orphan Fund Committee.

## SUBSCRIPTIONS BASIS

### "Should Be on 'Real' Wage"

AT the Blackpool Conference, the Association's treasurer made a most pathetic appeal for a substantial increase in subscriptions to meet the financial losses of the past two years, and an estimated deficit during the current year.

In the November journal, we find something entirely opposite to the making good of deficits—advertisements asking for candidates to fill a

number of parasitical posts that have been created. Now that the N.E.C. believes that more "spoils" are to be obtained from members, it intends to embark upon a course of squandering.

I wonder if the N.E.C., or Conference, have compared the position of the local government officer in 1939, and in 1945. Take the case of a married man, without children, who in 1939 had a salary of £400. His superannuation deductions were £20, and he paid £14 9s. income tax, leaving him with £365 11s. as real wages. Of this sum, he spent £300 and saved £65 11s. In 1945, the same man would get £400 salary plus £59 16s. cost-of-living bonus. From this would be deducted £22 19s. 9d. for superannuation, and £97 12s. 6d. for income tax, leaving him with £339 3s. 9d.—£26 7s. 3d. less than he had in 1939. On top of this, the Budget index of increased prices indicates that the cost of commodities has increased by at least 50 per cent. Omitting rents and rates, one can safely assume that the increase in the cost of living is 40 per cent. This being so, the £300 he had for living expenses in 1939 should have been increased by 40 per cent. In fact, he has had an increase equivalent only to 20 per cent on the £300. In other words the value of his salary has been reduced by £60 4s., making his real wages £279 a year; therefore, even after a cost-of-living increase of £59 16s., he is suffering a real wages reduction of £86 11s. a year.

I view of the fact that this member receives only £28 5s. 4d. a month in his wage packet, or £339 4s. a year, it would be enlightening to know by what miracle of calculation branch treasurers can arrive at the decision that he must pay subscriptions at the rate for salaries over £450. Surely the N.E.C. and Conference do not intend that income tax deductions shall be included in the calculations for arriving at the amount of a member's subscription. If they do, then the Association must expect to lose members, not gain them. I for one could not advise anyone to apply for membership under such iniquitous subscription conditions.

Sewage Works,  
Heathcote, Warwick.

J. E. GILLARD.

Mr. Gillard is wrong again. It was not increased subscriptions which incited the N.E.C. to increase staff, but the demand of Conference for more staff which made it necessary to put up subscriptions. He has forgotten the resolution of the 1943 Conference: "That this Conference, recognising the need for an increase in the organising staff of the Association, instructs the National Executive Council to prepare a scheme including, if necessary, increase in subscription rates to cover the increased cost. . . ."

True, the hon. treasurer referred to the deficits of the past two years—but he emphasised that they were "primarily a result of the big reorganisation scheme, introduced at the request of branches and Conference," and he went on to point out that "an improved organisation will mean more staff, which during the war has by no means kept pace with requirements."

As to the "parasitical posts," will Mr. Gillard take the same view when he wants NALGO to see that his own authority adopts the new national scales—scales, incidentally, which may mean quite a difference to his hypothetical £400-a-year member who expects to survive nearly six years of world war with no financial sacrifice?

Branch treasurers do not "decide" how subscriptions are to be assessed. That was decided by Conference as long ago as 1918, and is clearly defined in the Association's rules. Conference, of course, could change it—but nobody has yet suggested that it should.

## "Complacent and Indifferent"

WHILST Mr. Gillard, writing in the December journal, was obviously deeply annoyed at what he calls this constant "sidetracking and evasion," I feel that there is much with which I entirely agree.

NALGO does constantly brag about such things as war bonus and other trifling matters which, in an effective trades union or association would not be considered any achievement at all. The whole Association has been far too complacent and indifferent. Its structure is hampered by having so many people at the helm who have no real thought or consideration for those below them and who, in most cases, are perfectly happy with their own particular salaries and positions.

Take salary scales. We have been talking about them for months, and that is as far as we have got. The November journal made me want to laugh.



There was a bold heading which said: "National Salaries Next—And Then?" I feel that the question mark might usefully have been put after the word "salaries." This is no reflection on Mr. Harry Allen, the writer of the article.

What right has NALGO to raise the hopes of members by telling them that everything is as good as "in the bag" when it knows perfectly well that this is a deliberate exaggeration? It is not a scrap of good saying how many local authorities are members of provincial Whitley Councils, if the net results are nil.

How is it that the civil service and teachers' associations can obtain adequate salary scales and be able to enforce them? Do we hear them constantly bragging about what they do for the members? NALGO may boast as much as it pleases and appoint as many highly paid officers as it pleases when they have secured some real achievements, but until then I think it will be wise to play lightly upon the harp and not to sound the trumpet in praise of what it might get done at some indeterminate date.

When responsible officials complacently assure us that it is merely a formality before NALGO scales become operative, it is high time we considered whether or not we want extra administrative officials or simply new ones!

Most local authorities consist of more or less the same type of administrative departments. What difficulties are there in applying salary scales to local authorities which are not present in applying them to the multitudinous array of departments and grades in the civil service?

The fundamental bases upon which the proposed scales have been worked are wrong. Why exclude chief officers? Would the civil service grades ignore the chief officer of a department? Would teachers' scales apply to everyone but the head teacher? How is it possible to attempt to apply scales to other members of a department without taking into account such officers? The whole thing is absurd, as anyone with the brains of a rabbit could see! (At this point I might mention that I am not a chief officer.)

No doubt you will not publish my letter, since such a highly critical one may be misconstrued by the rank and file of NALGO and, anyway, two such letters in two consecutive issues may not be healthy! If you do, I should be glad if you will refrain from publishing my name and address, since it might have repercussions in my job. This in itself is evidence of a complete lack of confidence in the powers of the Association to which I belong.

REBUS SIC STANTIBUS.

#### Case for Higher Bonus?

I AGREE with some of the points raised in Mr. Gillard's long letter in the December journal. Although NALGO has obtained improved salary scales, they are becoming inadequate as time goes on. The cost of living is bounding up and up. Dearer coal, gas, electricity, furniture, and household requirements are only some of the items taking a big lump out of our wage-packets. Our dream-like increases will soon have as much value as the German 1,000-mark notes sold in the streets after the last war for twopenny. We would not be too bold in asking for an increased bonus of six shillings. If prices become fantastic, wages must follow suit.

NALGO will soon have to get cracking to see that bonus is merged into salary because the cost of living will never drop much again.

Mr. Gillard is right about T.U.C. affiliation. I think it was a scandal for the N.E.C. to flout the wishes of a democratic vote. Do the members count, or not? The matter is not dead yet, much as a few would wish it to be.

Croydon.

L. BARNES.

The N.E.C. has deliberately refrained from seeking a further increase in the bonus, although it regards the claim as fully justified, because of the negotiations for national salary scales now nearing completion. We hope to publish the new scales next month.

#### SOCIAL SECURITY

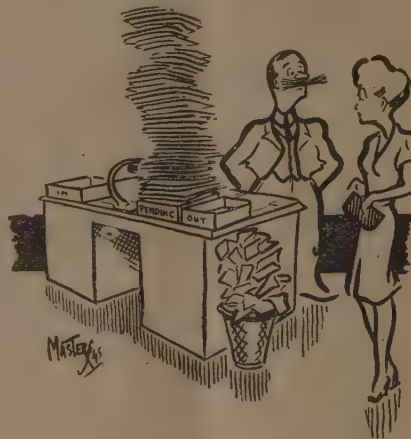
##### A Ground for Higher Salaries?

WHAT is to be our policy on salaries when the Social Security Bill is introduced? In my opinion, the security enjoyed by local government officers has an income value in the open labour market and, because of this, remuneration of most officers is considerably below—possibly as much as 25 per cent—what they would get in business.

If this is true, then the introduction of social security for all, by reducing the relative value of the local government officer's pension, provides a strong case for levelling up his salary.

It can reasonably be accepted that imports, released from raw materials and labour control, will soon begin to meet industrialists' demands, and that a flourishing export trade will open many opportunities in the field of commerce. In the absence of a clear-cut levelling-up policy by NALGO the two cases cited by "Abingdon" in the November journal will be the forerunners of a general exodus from local government to commerce.

NALGO, with its record of fine achievements, should tackle this problem with all its power,



"Mind you, Army life has kept me in touch with office routine."

in consultations on the salary grades of the national charter. My impression, on returning to the service after more than six years in the Forces, is that in the ranks of NALGO there are now many temporaries who have done excellent work during the difficult war years and who should be permanently appointed. Men and women from the Forces are returning to permanencies with a much broader outlook on life. How will these classes be able to resist applying for the more remunerative posts in industry and commerce, with its greater scope and with the knowledge that they may soon have reasonably cheap security with a much larger income?

Some readers may think that I have placed too much importance on the Social Security Bill. It would be interesting to have an authoritative opinion from Headquarters and the views of other members.

Walsford.

F. S. MONTAGUE.

#### EDUCATION CHIEFS

##### Teachers' Training Too "Cloistered"?

THE strongest case against teaching experience being an essential part of an educational administrator's qualifications is that its imposition is likely to encourage just the wrong type of person. What would happen, in fact, is that a boy or girl would leave school, go to college, become a teacher, and then later on change to educational administration: in other words, we should have at the top people who had never come into the uncloistered life at all, lacking ordinary working experience among adults.

At present, a youth never leaves school or its equivalent, college, until he has a teacher's job and is back at school! He lacks wider knowledge of general, wage, trade union, and administrative conditions—and even flies!

While there are, of course, exceptions to every rule, can anyone dispute the general truth of my case? Considering their education, experience does not show teachers taking their proportional place in the leadership of social movements and so on. This illustrates the truth of my assumption that a narrowness of outlook is forced on teachers by their training.

L.C.C. Branch.

S. H. HASSELL.

#### NEW GENERAL SECRETARY

##### We Should Practise What We Preach—

IN your November number—the first I have seen since my return to civilian status—is a most extraordinary letter under the heading "New General Secretary," and subscribed "Onward—For All." There appear to be so many questions to which this gentleman can find no adequate answer, that I am impelled to offer from my own little understanding what assistance I can to dispel his mental fog.

Since all the questions point to one cardinal stumbling block, an answer to that may suffice. "O—F.A." apparently feels that £2,000 a year is too high a salary to pay to the general secretary of NALGO, and that the post might well have been filled by promotion within the existing staff—a procedure which would at least have avoided letters from members!

We want, "O—F.A.," as the general secretary of NALGO, the most capable man we can afford to pay, not a £200 a year man, but indeed a £2,000 a year man. One of our main functions as a trade union is to ensure satisfactory conditions and adequate salaries for our members. Would you suggest that when we ourselves have a job to do we should endeavour to avoid paying a remuneration?

As to promotion within the existing staff—well, certainly there is surely someone capable of "holding down the job," but, oddly enough, the N.E.C. are no doubt trying to get the best possible man, and therefore the job is advertised to the public, "O—F.A." and many other hard-working members of the Association may, if they consider themselves suitable, offer their services in the arduous and thankless job.

Finally, lest you remain under any misapprehension, old school ties can be bought for as little as three shillings and sixpence.

LAURENCE A. HOLMES.

West Riding C.C.

#### —But Do We All the Time?

IN the November journal you invite applications for a general secretary at £2,000 a year, and for an assistant P.R.O. and district officers at £425.

One of NALGO's objects is to secure decent salaries for local government employees. We should therefore ensure that our own employees earn a salary upon which they can live.

I do not consider that £425 is such a salary, and ask that consideration be given to increasing it to £700 a year. This is equivalent to about £25 before the 1914-1918 war, and is just about adequate to "scratch along" on. If it could be made £800 or £900 it would be more like the figure we should offer.

If we want the best men, and we do, we must pay for them.

E. A. LEWIS.

#### HOMES FOR OFFICERS

##### Should Authorities Provide Them?

THE question whether local authorities should provide living accommodation for their officers concerns many of us. In the past, the police, commercial firms, banks, and shops have provided living accommodation for their staffs, while farmers frequently provide their horsemen and cowmen with cottages.

Surely it is in the interest of the local authority itself (and ultimately the community) that this should be done. Both demand a high standard of efficiency from their officers, many of whom take work home in the evening or else study for various professional examinations. But if the "home" consists of uncomfortable "digs" and few "digs" are without some disadvantages, this routine of work and study cannot be carried on.

Furthermore, if the officer is obliged to spend his leisure in fruitless house and flat hunting expeditions, he soon begins to suffer from physical and mental fatigue which inevitably affects his work.

It would seem reasonable, therefore, for the local authority to reserve a number of houses and flats for the married officers and small self-contained flats for the single ones.

Lincoln.

K. W. GRIMES.

#### THAT MEDICAL TEST

##### A Bar to Mobility

RECENTLY all the grave implications of the present practice of compelling officers transferring from one authority to another to undergo a medical examination reacted on me with a force that was both revealing and educational.

I was selected for interview for a senior appointment in a large borough, and was unanimously recommended for the post. However, at the subsequent medical examination, the council's medical officer reported adversely on my medical condition; and, despite my plea that my health had in no way impaired either my work in my present authority or my capacity to fulfil my duties in the post for which I was recommended on merit, the appropriate committee rejected me and recommended my runner-up.

It seems manifestly inequitable that an officer, who, having been passed as fit for the service of his initial entry, should notwithstanding have his



NALGO wants

## MORE DISTRICT OFFICERS AND ASSISTANT PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICER

The National Association of Local Government Officers invites applications (including applications from members of H.M. Forces) for the posts of

### PERMANENT DISTRICT OFFICER

There are a number of vacancies to be filled, and salaries will be within the ranges of £320 to £400 or £425 to £500, depending on the experience and qualifications of the candidate. A cost-of-living bonus (at present 23/- p.w.) will also be paid.

The successful candidates will be required to carry out the work of organising local government officers in the areas to which they may be assigned, to attend meetings, and to represent the Association before local authorities and other bodies when required. Organising experience, energy, enthusiasm, and ability in public speaking are essential qualifications, and a knowledge of local government, its functions and procedure, is desirable. Travelling and reasonable subsistence allowances will be granted.

### ASSISTANT PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICER

Essential qualifications are energy, enthusiasm, ability in writing and public speaking, and wide knowledge of local government: experience of newspaper and publicity work is desirable. Salary from £425 to £500, according to age and qualifications, plus bonus (at present 23/- per week).

All the above appointments will be subject to one month's notice on either side. A superannuation scheme is in operation.

Applications, giving full particulars of age, education, qualifications, N.A.L.G.O. and other experience, and names of three persons to whom reference may be made, must reach the Acting General Secretary, NALGO, 24, Abingdon Street, London, S.W.1, by January 31, 1946, the envelope being marked "District Officer," or "Public Relations." Testimonials need not accompany the application. Canvassing members of the Council will be a disqualification.

mobility curtailed by subsequent medical examinations still within the service when his unfitness has been contracted in local government to which he has dedicated his career.

There should, I am convinced, be a nationally-controlled central superannuation fund for all officers in the service, the initial medical examination on entry covering all movement from authority to authority, similar to that governing the entry of civil servants. Local authorities should accept the risk of such employment as their contribution to local government as a whole. After all, what they may lose on the swings of the occasional unfit entrant, they gain on the roundabouts of the equally-occasional unfit officer being transferred away.

This pernicious system will probably seriously affect the future prospects of disabled ex-service men now returning from P.O.W. camps and other war service.

### "BLIGHTED CAREER."

The National Whitley Council has recently made a helpful recommendation on this point which is referred to on page 2.

## INFORMATION BUREAUX

### "A Form of Higher Education"

I READ with great interest your October editorial on information bureaux. The need for these, especially in the more populous districts, became apparent in the early days of the war, when much time was spent on inquiries about evacuation, billeting, health, and a hundred-and-one other things. The problems of post-war life are becoming increasingly complex, and:

Much time is given to answering inquiries in different departments;

Co-ordination and centralisation gives better all-round results; and

The public needs a service of this kind, especially in view of the general lack of knowledge of the functions and activities of local government.

I suggest, therefore, that some move be made through NALGO to approach either the Ministry of Health or individual authorities, urging them seriously to consider setting up of inquiry or information bureaux staffed by experienced local government officers. Such a service is both a public need and a form of higher education in itself, and I consider that it would amply justify its existence. Like all newcomers to the

market, it would need ample publicity given to its purpose, scope and address.

R.A.C., O.C.T.U., E. MATTHEWS, Trooper, R.M.C., Camberley. Willesden Branch.

Trooper Matthews has been forestalled. As he will see from the article on page 3, the Minister of Health has asked all county borough and district councils to set up information centres, either themselves or through an existing voluntary agency such as the Citizens' Advice Bureau.

## UNSUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS Why Not Inform Them?

A MAN not in the service applied recently for a position under a certain council, and waited expectantly to hear the result. In due course he heard, indirectly, that the position had been filled. Not being an official, he was surprised that he had had no acknowledgment, nor any intimation that he had failed in his application.

This, of course, is a common experience. Those who are old hands at applying never expect to be informed that they have failed. They are surprised when the clerk goes so far as to give the name of the person who has been appointed.

It is high time that all clerks to local authorities had the courtesy to inform the unsuccessful candidates. As clerk of a council I have always made a point of informing them, and I have been as short of staff as most.

H. W.

## A SUPERANNUATION ANOMALY "Service Under 18 Should Count"

I SUPPORT most strongly the plea of "Bradford Member" in the November journal that local government service before the age of 18 should be reckoned in calculating pension.

I entered the service at 17, after a secondary school education, but I have worked with many men who had not that advantage and who came in at 14. I have seldom found one who has not been well up to his job. During nearly 14 years' service as a chief officer, I have been most ably served by men, and women, who had come into the service at age 14. Until the school leaving age is raised for all, I hope there will be no bar on these persons, and I see no reason to exclude them from the superannuation scheme.

Grendon,  
Minehead.

A. G. MANSFIELD.

## READING OF "HANSARD" Is It Worth While?

"HANSARD" is a full report of all proceedings in Parliament, and I cannot see how it would benefit the British Empire for Mr. Whitehead painstakingly to peruse this enormous mass of words (mainly uttered by nonentities). Nor do I see how this action on his part could have prevented the birth of a Hitler or the discovery of the atomic bomb.

It is the problem of the future on which we have to concentrate. If Mr. Whitehead's followers can only suggest "Hansard" as a solution, then I repeat that they would spend their time better in attending to their back gardens. I am not indifferent and do advocate a constructive policy.

5, Courtnell Street, JOHN C. LAWRENCE.  
Bayswater, W.2.

## APPOINTMENT VACANT Borough of Edmonton Town Planning Assistant

Applications are invited for the appointment of Town Planning Assistant in the Borough Engineer and Surveyor's Department, on Grade D of the Council's scale of salaries, commencing at £405 per annum and rising by annual increments of £35 to a maximum of £450 per annum, plus cost of living bonus, at present 23/- per week. The commencing salary will be fixed according to the experience and qualifications of the selected candidate.

Candidates must have experience in the preparation of planning schemes and in dealing with applications for development under the General Interim Development Orders, and should be conversant with the provisions of the Town and Country Planning Act, 1944. The appointment will be subject to the Local Government Superannuation Act, 1937, and the selected candidate will be required to pass a medical examination.

Applications to be made in writing and addressed to the undersigned, with copies of not more than three testimonials, endorsed "Town Planning Assistant," not later than 12 noon on Saturday, January 18th, 1946.

Canvassing, either directly or indirectly, will be a disqualification.

Town Hall,  
Edmonton.  
19th December, 1945.

H. BACKHOUSE,  
Town Clerk.

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## MATRICULATION

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Send for particulars to—  
**CIVIL SERVICE CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOL**  
(Established 1934), 10, STATION PARADE,  
BALHAM HIGH ROAD, LONDON, S.W.12.

Honeymoons and Holidays.—Sheltered pineland hillside among Surrey Commons. Children welcomed. Morris Lodge Hotel, Goug Hill, nr. Farnham, Surrey. (Frensham 362.)



# 14 NALGO ROLL OF HONOUR

WE had hoped that by this time the monthly Roll of Honour would have shrunk to mention only of the return of repatriated prisoners and belated awards, but branches continue to send notifications of casualties, often greatly delayed. Will all branch officers concerned please look through their records and send to Headquarters immediately details of any not previously notified?

H.M. Forces

## KILLED OR DIED ON SERVICE

Baron, P/O. J., 53, R.N., clerk's dept., Portsmouth.  
Bradshaw, F/Sgt. G. A., R.A.F., treasurer's dept., Bucks C.C.  
Brookhurst, F/O. N., 23, R.A.F., clerk's dept., Macclesfield.  
Brown, Sgt/Navr., R. B. H., R.A.F. education dept., Norwich.  
Caudery, F/Lt. D. E., R.A.F., health dept., Bucks C.C.  
Colman, Lt. K. J., education dept., Norwich.  
Cooper, Yeoman of Signals, G. E., 27, R.N., clerk's dept., Portsmouth.  
Coulson, Sgt/P., F., R.A.F., electricity dept., Portsmouth.  
Cremer, Lt. T. E., 30, R.M., clerk's dept., Portsmouth.  
Dewing, P. J., F.A.A., treasurer's dept., Norwich.  
Farrington, F/Sgt/Navr., R.A.F., treasurer's dept., Norwich.  
Fenton, F/Sgt. J., R.A.F., surveyor's dept., Rawtenstall.  
Flitton, D. N., engineer's dept., Luton.  
Ford, F/Sgt. R. J. N., 23, R.A.F., treasurer's dept., Hayes and Harlington U.D.  
Forder, Sgtm. R. F., R.C. of S., treasurer's dept., Norwich.  
\*Francis, E. H., R.N., engineer's dept., Luton.  
†Gilchrist, A.C.1, G. R., 25, R.A.F., welfare dept., South Shields (in Japanese hands).  
Goddard, Sgt/Obs. C. E., R.A.F., electricity dept., Portsmouth.  
†Gregson, Gun. Sig. J. E., R.A., surveyor's dept., Preston (in Japanese hands).  
Grey, Sgt. W. P., 27, transport dept., Manchester.  
Hewett, F/O. J. A., R.A.F., treasurer's dept., Norwich.  
Higgins, A. M., transport dept., Luton.  
Hodgkinson, WOP/AG., D. E., 25, R.A.F., housing supervisor, Otley U.D.  
Hollis, Capt. F. E., electricity dept., Norwich.  
Howell, Sgt. R. F., R.A.F., health dept., Norwich.  
Kent, Sgt/P., R. F., 31, R.A.F., valuation dept., Stepney.  
Linklater, Cpl. G., R.A.S.C., county clerk and treasurer's dept., Shetland C.C.  
Mitchell, F/O. N. S., R.A.F., treasurer's dept., Rawtenstall.  
†Mogridge, A.B., W. G., R.N., roads dept., Devon C.C. (in Japanese hands).  
Moore, Sgt/P. F., R.A.F., libraries dept., Norwich.  
†Muir, Bdr. J. L., R.A., surveyor's dept., Preston (in Japanese hands).  
Parker, L/A/C., R.C., R.A.F., public assistance dept., Bucks C.C. (in Japanese hands).  
†Parkinson, Gnr/Sig. G. R., R.A., docks dept., Preston (in Japanese hands).  
Porter, F/O. E. D., R.A.F., welfare dept., Norwich.  
Povall, Lt/Cdr., E., 35, R.N.V.R., treasurer's dept., Glamorgan C.C.  
Sharpe, Sgt/Navr. J., R.A.F., engineer's dept., Norwich.  
Taylor, A/C. R. H., 32, R.A.F., treasurer's dept., Esher (in Japanese hands).  
Turner, P/O. G. P., R.A.F., planning dept., Bucks C.C.  
Vincent, Dvr. L., treasurer's dept., Norwich (in Japanese hands).  
Ward, Lt. J. F., 25, Hampshire Regt., valuation dept., Portsmouth.  
Wedgewood, Lt. P., R.M., clerk's dept., Norwich.  
Wilkins, Lt. T. J., 27, mental deficiency colony, Glamorgan C.C.  
Willett, Sub/Lt. A., R.N.V.R., electricity dept., Portsmouth.  
Williams, P/O. D., 22, R.A.F.V.R., treasurer's dept., Glamorgan C.C.

**MISSING**  
Hinds, G. E., engineer's dept., Luton.  
Metcalf, F/O. R., R.A.F., clerk's dept., Palmers Green (presumed killed).  
Mounsey, P/O. E. G., 24, R.A.F., engineer's dept., Hayes and Harlington U.D.  
\*Smith, F/Sgt. D. A. J., R.A.F., engineer's dept., Portsmouth (presumed killed).  
Young, L/A/C. R. C., R.A.F., clerk's dept., Isle of Wight C.C.

## REPATRIATED PRISONERS

Appleby, Dvr. A. S., Manchester; Archer, Spr. A. S., South Shields; Browning, Bdr. A., Barking; Chapman, Sgt. A. R. C., Farnborough; Cooper, Lt. N., Hastings; Diamond, A., Barking; Elworthy, Bdr. V., Surrey; Foard, Bdr. A., Surrey; Freestone, Cpl. R. H., Surrey; Gillis, Pte. R. E., Hastings; Hay, Pte. K., Barking; James, S/Ldr. E. A., Surrey; Jenkins, Spr. F. J., Hastings; Jepps, L/Cpl. L. A., L. & H.C.J.E.A.; Johnston, Lt. J. A., Surrey; Johnston, Gnr. J., Liverpool; Kershaw, Sig. G. F., South Shields; Paterson, A/C. L. D. B., Manchester; Peacock, Maj. B., Surrey; Podmore, Pte. N., Manchester; Rancorn, S/Sgt. H. A., Hastings; Ridell, Pte. J. D., Portsmouth; Turner, Sgt. H. G., Surrey; Woolley, Pte. R. W., Hastings.  
\*Previously reported missing.  
†Previously reported prisoner.

## AWARDS TO MEMBERS

### CROIX DE GUERRE

Fulford, A/B. P., R.N., finance dept., Devon C.C.

### M.C.

Bennett, Lt. K. W., waterworks dept., Manchester.

### D.F.C.

Croghan, W/O. M. J. A., 23, R.A.F., electricity dept., Manchester—for his work in a large number of operations in the Arakan and Rangoon areas.

Guy, F/Lt. F. W., R.A.F., highways dept., Manchester.

Marshall, S/Ldr. T. B., R.A.F., engineer's dept., Portsmouth.

Wright, S/Ldr. H. C., R.A.F., Acton—S/Ldr. Wright has completed numerous sorties since the award of the D.F.C. As navigation leader he has shown himself to be most capable and conscientious. The coolness and determination which he has always displayed have been a fine example to all with whom he has flown.

### A.F.C.

Godslave, F/Lt. W. H. I., R.A.F., treasurer's dept., Cheshire C.C.

### M.M.

Birch, Cpl. A. W., R.C. of S., treasurer's dept., Newcastle-under-Lyne.

### D.F.M.

Cornes, G. E., engineer's dept., Luton.  
Fowkes, F/Sgt. D. J., R.A.F.V.R., clerk's dept., Surrey—Sgt. Fowkes has completed numerous operations against the enemy, in the course of which he has invariably displayed the utmost fortitude, courage, and devotion to duty.

Kesson, P/O. J., R.A.F., roads dept., Clackmannan C.C.

### G.M.

Roseveare, Lt/Col. H. K., R.E., engineer's dept., Portsmouth.

Scott, T. F., gas dept., Brighouse—for bravery in connection with his work in the secret service in Yugoslavia.

### O.B.E.

Roseveare, Lt/Col. H. K., R.E., engineer's dept., Portsmouth (see also under G.M.).

### M.B.E.

Bentham, S.Q.M.S. K. C., 27, R.A.O.C., clerk's dept., Eccles—for meritorious work as chief clerk at a large ammunition depot on the Holland side of the Rhine.

Jones, Lt. G., R.N.V.R., treasurer's dept., Glamorgan C.C.

Robjohn, Maj. L. H., R.E., engineer's dept., Portsmouth.

### B.E.M.

Beaney, S/Sgt. C. B., education dept., Hastings.

### OAK LEAF

Eldridge, F/Lt. J. R., R.A.F., Chelsea—for valuable services in the air.

Robertson, P/O. J., R.A.F., housing dept., Alloa.

## CERTIFICATE OF MERIT

Beaney, S/Sgt. C. B., education dept., Hastings—for outstandingly good service in 1944.

Kell, Sgt. J. W. R., R.E., engineer's dept., Barking.

## MENTIONED IN DISPATCHES

Bates, P/O. S. T., R.A.F., electricity dept., Manchester.

Foulkes, Sgt/Obs. L., electricity dept., Manchester.

Grisedale, Cpl. J. E., R.A.S.C., baths dept., Liverpool—for distinguished service in N. Europe.

Harrop, Sgt. F., R.E., architect's dept., Cheshire.

Lewis, Lt. R. A., S.W.B., treasurer's dept., Glamorgan C.C.

Rose, Sgt. A. F., 31, R.A.M.C., mental treatment dept., Portsmouth—for gallant and distinguished services in Italy.

Stones, Cdr. N., R.N., rating and valuation dept., Tadcaster R.D.—for courage, resolution and skill in minesweeping operations, clearing channel from the Humber to Heligoland, a thence along the North German Coast to Cuxhaven, Hamburg, and Bremerhaven during May 1945.

## Civilians

### KILLED OR DIED

Burnett, Amb. Pte., R.E., S.J.A.B., surveyor's dept., Bucks C.C.

Davison, J. W., engineer's dept., Norwich (whilst on firewatching duties).

Wasley, T., treasurer's dept., Norwich.

## CIVILIAN AWARDS

### B.E.M.

Pollard, H. E., engineer's dept., Portsmouth.

### KING'S FIRE SERVICE MEDAL

Loveridge, C. J., 53, divisional officer, N.F. Portsmouth.

## Middle East Members Kept in Touch Through Study Groups

"Abingdon" has referred to the fine work done by the local government study groups formed by NALGO members in the Middle East. Here is an account of them by A. M. J. PONSFORD, first treasurer of the parent group at Cairo.

THE Local Government Study Group, Cairo, was founded in September, 1944, when about seventy enthusiastic members of NALGO serving in the Forces met and decided to attend fortnightly for study and lectures.

From the outset, the group consisted largely of would-be I.M.T.A. students like myself—in Army ranking from private to major, and in R.A.F. from A.C.2 to flight-lieutenant. The enthusiasm was astonishing: some members attended regularly, even when to do so involved a journey of 30 miles or more, from desert stations sometimes in violent duststorms. In addition to the NALGO members, we had former local government officers from New Zealand, South Africa and America at almost every meeting—two of them lectured on local government in New Zealand and the United States respectively. In addition, an Egyptian cabinet minister took about local government in his country. Live discussions followed each lecture.

Owing to movements of units and personnel nominal membership was constantly changing but during the period of my treasurership—from the formation of the group to August, 1945—more than 100 members had been enrolled.

A sub-group was soon formed to study I.M.T.A. examinations, and met on alternate weeks. It was agreed that each member should give a lecture on a set subject from matter set by NALGO, the Association of Local Government Financial Officers, and other sources, provide training in public speaking.

The Cairo group became the forerunner of other local government groups in the Middle East—the first at Alexandria, then another group in the Canal area. Reading matter and epitomes were kindly prepared by officers in Britain, who were ever ready to assist the group in collecting study and discussions. It was not long before we had to seek accommodation for a library to which text books and literature were frequently added.

Although miles from home, we felt that to form of "keeping in touch" with current legislation and affairs would be amply repaid on our return to civil life. Some of us luckier of have returned, and we send best wishes for continued success to those still attached to, and studying with, the Middle East groups.



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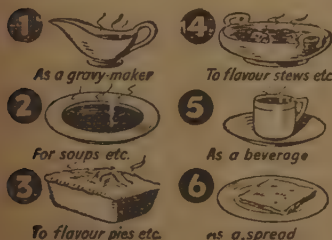
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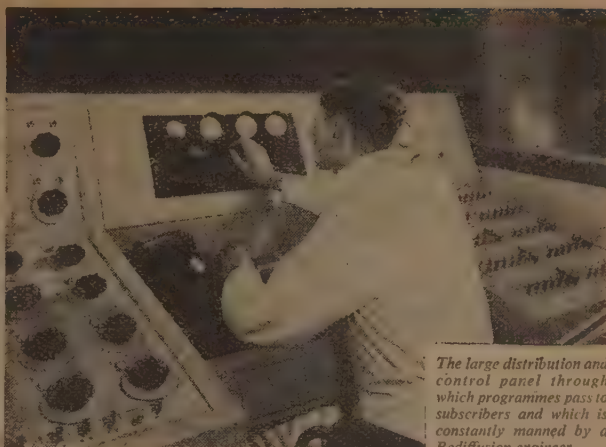
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## Three Reinstatement Headaches—and Their Cure

**Headache No. 1.** *Be careful to carry out to the letter the official instructions you get when you are demobilised.*

How important this is was illustrated recently by a case before the Birmingham Reinstatement Committee, in which a shorthand-typist seeking reinstatement on demobilisation from the W.A.A.F., admitted that she had made no written application. She had filled in the form and had it in her bag during her interviews with the treasurer, in whose office she had formerly worked, but did not hand it in because she "did not think it was necessary."

The committee rejected the claim on the ground that the applicant had failed (1) to make application in writing within the prescribed period and (2) to notify her employers when she would be available for re-employment, the chairman commenting:

"I want to emphasise the importance of people coming out of the Services making a written statement of application for reinstatement and giving the date on which they will be available. They often drift along and presently it comes out, as in this case, that no written application has been made at all. Every person leaving the Services is handed a pamphlet which tells him to put in a written claim not later than the fifth Monday after release, otherwise he may lose his claim for reinstatement."

**Headache No. 2.** *When is demob. leave not leave?*

This question is being asked by those returning from the Forces with a period of overseas leave to their credit.

The Reinstatement in Civil Employment Act, 1944, says that all seeking reinstatement must send to their former employer a written application not later than the *fifth* Monday after the first day of demobilisation, and must tell the employer when they are ready to start work, giving a date not later than the *ninth* Monday after demobilisation.

In other words, those demobilised on a Monday are entitled to a maximum of 62 days' leave before returning to work; had they been demobilised on a Saturday, they would get 57 days.

But a man or woman who has served abroad is allowed more than the 56 days' demobilisation leave allowed to Class A releases—one additional day for each month of overseas service. What happens to him? Must he, to claim reinstatement, sacrifice the leave after the ninth Monday, or may

### NALGO APPROVED SOCIETY

#### Pensions Contributions Raised

In accordance with the provisions of Section 43 (2) of the Widows, Orphans, and Old Age Contributory Pensions Act, 1925, the rate of pensions contributions is to be increased by 2d. a week for men and 1d. a week for women from January 7, 1946.

Where contributors are employed, the employer will pay half the amount of the increase—i.e. 1d. a week for men, and the whole amount of 1d. for women.

It is regretted that when this announcement was published in the December journal it was incorrectly stated that the employer would pay only 3d. a week for women.

he ignore the instructions of the Reinstatement Act?

NALGO put this point to the Ministry of Labour. Here is its answer:

If a man entitled to foreign service leave wants to postpone his return to work after the 56 days of normal leave, he should tell his employer so when he applies for reinstatement, and ask the employer to give his consent in writing to the delay in the date notified.

The Ministry does not say what happens if the employer refuses his consent, beyond observing hopefully that "it is not anticipated that difficulties will arise, in such circumstances, which cannot be settled by the exercise of mutual understanding and goodwill on the part of both applicant and employer" and adding that authoritative interpretations of the Act can be given only by a reinstatement committee or the umpire appointed under the Act.

**Headache No. 3.** *"If I do go back to work while still on release leave, is my local authority entitled to deduct from my salary the war service pay and allowances I receive until my leave expires"?*

(Continued in next column)

## Training the Hospital Administrator

THE Minister of Health has so far refused to be drawn into a definite statement that the whole of the hospital service is to be unified under single control, state, municipal, or regional. But, whatever the Government's plans may be, it is certain that great improvements in the hospital service are on the way—improvements in detailed administration as well as in large-scale organisation. As in other branches of public service, these will call for better training of, and higher qualifications for, hospital administrators.

Thus the report of the Joint Committee on the Training and Qualification of Hospital Administration, just published, arrives at an opportune moment. The committee, formed at a conference convened by the Institute of Hospital Administration, in 1943, and composed of representatives of government departments, local authorities, voluntary hospitals, universities, and two staff organisations—NALGO and the National Association of Administrators of Local Government Establishments—bases its recommendations on two broad principles enumerated at the 1943 conference:

That hospital administration is of such importance as to call for special training leading to a recognised qualification; and

That it is desirable to establish a standard qualifying examination in hospital administration (to be taken in one or more parts) and to lay down conditions for admission to the examination.

In the light of these principles, the committee recommends that:

A standard examination in hospital administration common to all sections of the hospital service should be established to replace the existing separate examinations for voluntary, public authority general, and mental hospitals; the examination should be divided into two parts—intermediate and final, the former a general basic test, and the latter a test in specialist subjects directly related to practical hospital work;

Entry to the final examination should be restricted

to those with a minimum of two years' service on the administrative staff of a hospital;

The examinations committee should consist of representatives of the employing authorities, relevant government departments, the universities, NALGO and NAALGE, as well as the Institute of Hospital Administration; and

This examining body, while of independent status and solely responsible for the conduct of the examinations, including the appointment of examiners and prescribing of regulations and syllabus, should operate within the framework of the Institute of Hospital Administrators, which will accept financial responsibility.

The joint committee hopes that hospital authorities will give due weight to a qualification established and controlled as a result of decisions in which their representatives have shared and will continue to share.

Candidates for senior hospital administrative posts should, the committee feels, be required to hold the new diploma unless they were in the service before the new arrangement became operative or were already qualified in certain existing professional examinations.

The next steps are to consider the establishment of a similar diploma for Scotland, and to explore the means of providing special training once the principle of a standard examination is established.

### The Atom—and Security

LONDON members concerned—as all must be nowadays—in world as well as local affairs, should be interested in a series of lectures on atomic energy and international security arranged by the Fabian International Bureau. Beginning on January 12, the lectures are to be given fortnightly on Saturday afternoons at Conway Hall, and the lecturers include Professor J. D. Bernal, Ritchie Calder, Ian Mikardo, M.P., R. H. S. Crossman, M.P., Sir Arthur Salter, M.P., and Philip Noel-Baker, M.P. Details and tickets for the course (3s. 6d. and 7s. 6d.) are obtainable from the Bureau, 11, Dartmouth Street, S.W.1.

## Branch Thank-Offerings: Swell B. and O. Fund

PESSIMISTS said, on the outbreak of war, that the Association's benevolent orphan fund would soon become a spent force through too many claims on its funds, and many cuts in its income. How wrong they were! And how branches' money-raising activities stimulated, rather than checked, is now a matter of history.

Part of the increase in contributions came from thank-offerings by relatives for the safe return or recovery from wounds of members of the Forces. Donations have also been made in memory of colleagues killed in action. At Staines, for instance, where nine members out of a total of 11 are still serving, £114 5s. was raised and sent to the fund as a memorial to FRANK H. killed while serving with the R.A.F.

Other recent contributions come from: Bradford, £178 12s. (Christmas draw, "buy and buy" sale, dances, and donations); B. £58 3s. (whist drives, and dances); Coalville, (dances and raffles); Coventry, £19 18s. 1d. (Coseley, £50 (sale of brochures and collection local government exhibition, social evenings, raffles); East Grinstead, £3 4s. 4d. (staff social); Grantham, £15 5s. 8d. (dance); Hendon, £87 13s. (garden fete) and £17 11s. 8d. (raffles, dance, football competition); Hampstead, £4 10s. (contribution at the branch annual meeting); Islington, £15 14s. 3d. (whist drive and donation); L. Talbot, £45 (children's Victory ball); Salisbury, £50; Sutton and Cheam, £35 5s. 10d. (social activities and donations); Thornton Cleveleys, Poulton, £65 (show by local repertory company "Love from a Stranger"); Wimbledon, £23 5s. (raffle and donation).

(Continued from preceding column)

Here again, NALGO asked the Ministry of Labour. Its answer was non-committal:

"Should a reinstated person complain to an employer has made such a deduction, said, 'he may apply to a reinstatement committee to determine the question of his right under the Act.'"

The short answer, of course, to these and other reinstatement problems, is to contact NALGO—your branch secretary or your district officer. NALGO exists to help you.

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## SALARIES AND SERVICE CONDITIONS

### METROPOLITAN

Merton and Morden U.D. has reverted to reduced peace-time working hours of 38 a week.

### NORTH-EASTERN

Newcastle-upon-Tyne C.B. has adopted the provincial council scales and regraded the staff with effect from October 1, 1944.

Eston U.D. has granted an application for the transfer of the deputy engineer and surveyor to grade E.—£375-420—and the architectural assistant to grade D.—£315-360. Both officers have recently returned from war service.

The Appeals committee has awarded in favour of the Association's claim for regrading 11 officers employed by Eston U.D. The claim on behalf of

authorities have, in fact, adopted the provincial council holiday scheme.

### EAST MIDLANDS

Rutland C.C. has adopted provincial council scale 1 from April 1, 1945.

Scunthorpe B. has, on the application of the acting district officer, agreed to adopt the remainder of provincial council scale 2 from October 1, 1945—grades A and B having already been adopted from April 1, 1945—and has approved the establishment of a local joint committee.

On the application of the acting district officer, the provincial council appeals committee has allowed the appeal of a woman officer employed by Buxton B. for regrading from the general to the clerical division, the regrading to take effect from August 1, 1944.

Leicester C.C. and Lindsey C.C. have reverted to their pre-war hours of 38½ a week.

Northants C.C. has revised office hours to 37½ a week, with a provision for payment, at plain-time rates, of overtime in excess of 39 hours and to a maximum of 44. The council has also, on the application of the branch, approved the principle of consultation with the branch on matters affecting salaries and service conditions.

### WEST MIDLANDS

Stafford C.C. and Worcester C.B. have decided to allow salaried registration officers to retain the fees paid for certain wartime services, in the former case retrospectively.

Stafford B. has adopted the following revised salary scales from April 1, 1946: Juniors: £45 (under 16); £58 (at 16) × 13—£110 (at 20); Men: (21 and over): A. £130 × 15—£235; B. £235 × 12½—£285; C. £290 × 15—£335; D. £350 × 15—£395. Women (21 and over): A. £120 × 10—£150; B. £150 × 10—£170; C. £180 × 10—£200; D. £210 × 10—£230. Automatic transfer to Grade A on April 1 nearest 21st birthday.

Stourbridge B. has adopted provincial council scale 2.

### SOUTH-EASTERN

Surrey C.C. has adopted, from November 1, 1945, amended scales for the general grade (men) with a maximum of £290 at 28, and the general grade (women) with a maximum of £220 at 26, with adjustments of increments in certain other grades.

## "Rehabilitation" Plan for 17 Finance Officers

LATEST to join the lengthening list of professional bodies with plans for the "rehabilitation" of their members returning from the Forces is the Institute of Municipal Treasurers and Accountants. By "rehabilitation" it means the provision of refresher training to bring men up to date in the theory and practice of municipal accountancy. The Institute divides ex-Service men into three categories—those already professionally qualified, those wishing to qualify, and those not wishing to qualify but desirous of employment in the subordinate ranks.

For men already holding a professional qualification, it proposes the provision of varied practical experience within their own departments;

### A HAPPY NEW YEAR!

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the interchange of staff between authorities; and facilities for tuition at a local government staff college, where accountants would attend side by side with members of other professions. Finally, the Institute suggests that its diploma should be recognized as a qualification for senior financial appointments in local government.

For those wishing to qualify, the Institute recommends pre-demobilisation study, followed by varied practical experience on their return to local government and correspondence tuition for the Institute's examinations. It also advocates: (a) the establishment by local education authorities of technical courses in subjects common to the examinations of various professional bodies, and, where convenient, the provision of facilities at universities; and (b) the recognition of examination qualifications by the award of bonuses.

For those who, though employed in finance departments, do not wish to acquire professional status, it suggests: (a) intensive training in the specialised duties to which they are allocated; and (b) seniority and status equivalent to that which they would have attained but for war service.

### Health-Message No. 2—

#### DANGEROUS DAYS FOR COLDS

An American doctor claims that most colds start on Monday mornings. Still no preventive is known, and if you must put up with seven or fourteen days' illness as a result of a cold, make sure you are entitled to claim sick pay from the Nalگو Provident Society. Details can be obtained from your branch local correspondent or from NALGO, 24, Abingdon Street, Westminster, S.W.1.

three others was rejected, and one case was referred.

Blaydon U.D., on an application from the Association, has agreed to increase the salary of the surveyor from £500 to £600 a year.

Billingham U.D. has joined the provincial council. There are now 62 constituent members.

The provincial council sick pay scheme has been adopted by West Hartlepool C.B., Morpeth, Stockton-on-Tees, and Thornaby-on-Tees B.s., and Shildon U.D.

Thornaby-on-Tees B. has adopted the provincial council holiday scheme.

Haltwhistle R.D. has granted applications for increases in the salary of the clerk from £450 to 500 × 50—£650; of the rating clerk from 325 × 35—£375 × 15—£420; of the sanitary inspector from £250 to £315 × 15—£360; and for the regrading of other officers.

Correction.—In November, we reported in error that Darlington C.B. and Newbigin U.D. had adopted the provincial council scales. These

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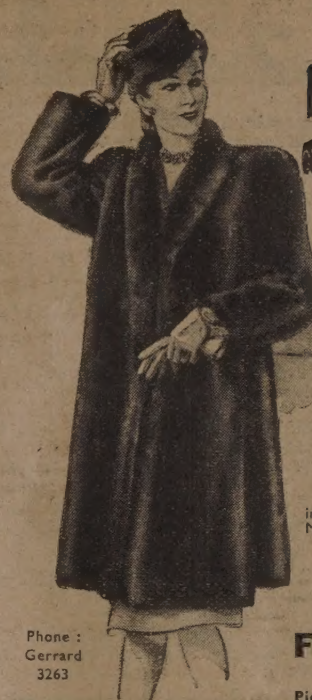
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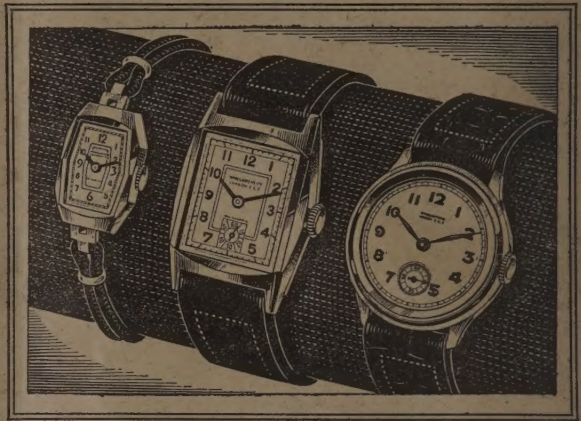
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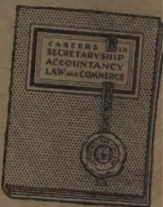
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